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MISCELLANEA SACRA.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MISCELLANEA SACRA:

CONTAINING

AN ABSTRACT OF THE SCRIPTURE-HISTORY OF THE APOSTLES,

IN A NEW METHOD.

WITH FOUR CRITICAL ESSAYS:

I. ON THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

II. ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN APOSTLES, ELDERS, AND BRETHREN.

III. ON THE TIME WHEN PAUL AND BARNABAS BECAME APOSTLES.

IV. ON THE APOSTOLICAL DECREE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN ESSAY ON THE DISPENSATIONS OF GOD TO MANKIND, AS REVEALED IN SCRIPTURE:

TOGETHER WITH A DISSERTATION ON HEBREWS XII. 22—25. NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

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ESSAY II.

ON

The Diſtinction between APOSTLES, ELDERS, and BRETHREN.

THE appellation of apoſtles, elders, and brethren, occur often ſeparately in the New Teſtament; and the famous letter mentioned Acts xv. 23. going from them jointly (as comprehending the whole church at Jeruſalem) to the brethren which were of the Gentiles, in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia; and it being of ſuch conſequence to the right underſtanding the New Teſtament, to underſtand the character of an apoſtle; and of ſo much difficulty to underſtand what is meant by an elder in this text: and it being impoſſible to know what is meant by brethren without underſtanding what is meant by the other two: I have thought it might be of ſome uſe to conſider each of them by themſelves: and then briefly to conſider the ſtate of the church at that time, as far as their

acting together on this occaſion will open it unto us. By which we may better comprehend not only what is meant by each of theſe characters, but what was the ſtate of the chriſtian church, in the early times of the apoſtles.

The firſt time we meet with the name of apoſtles, is Luke vi. 12, 13. "And it came "to paſs in thoſe days, that Jeſus went into "a mountain to pray, and continued all night "in prayer to God; and when it was day, "he called unto him his diſciples, and of "them he choſe twelve, whom he alſo nam-"ed apoſtles:" deſigning to ſend them to preach the kingdom of God. Our Saviour praying all night before his choice (or ſpending the whole night "in an houſe of prayer"), might perhaps be directed by God, whom to chooſe for this high and important office: for Jeſus ſays in his prayer to God, ſpeaking of the twelve, "thoſe that thou haſt given "me I have kept [a]." And Peter declares, "the witneſſes to whom Chriſt ſhewed him-"ſelf openly, were choſen of God [b];" and for this reaſon St. Paul, who was not one whit behind the chiefeſt of the apoſtles, calls himſelf "an apoſtle of God," as well as of Chriſt, in moſt of his epiſtles [c]: and aſſerts,

[a] John xvii. 6. 9. 12. [b] Acts x. 41.
[c] 1 Cor. i. 1. 2 Cor. i. 1. Gal. i. 1. Eph. i. 1. Col. i. 1. 1 Tim. i. 1. 2 Tim. i. 1. Tit. i. 1.

that

that "God had ſeparated him for this work "from his mother's womb[d];" (alluding to his ſeparation, as a Phariſee, that pretended to be ſeparated from the reſt of mankind by their greater ſanctity): as he likewiſe ſays, that Ananias told him, "that the God of our "fathers had choſen him[e]." Some time after Jeſus had choſen his twelve diſciples, "He called them together, and gave them "power and authority over all devils, and to "cure diſeaſes, and ſent them to preach the "kingdom of God, and heal the ſick[f]." Mark gives us much the ſame account of Chriſt's chooſing them[g]; and Matthew and Mark of Chriſt's ſending them[h]; but Matthew takes no notice of Chriſt's chooſing them. Thus however we ſee they were to go "and preach the kingdom of "God:" or at leaſt to preach the kingdom of God ſo far as to ſay "it was at hand[i]." And therefore as John Baptiſt had only preached, that "the kingdom of heaven" (or the kingdom that God was ſetting up in the world under Chriſt, the kingdom foretold by Daniel[k], underſtood by the Jews, and expected by the world, as Mr. Sykes has with great labour and ſkill proved to be the mean-

[d] Gal. i. 15. [e] Acts xxii. 14.
[f] Luke ix. 42. [g] Mark iii. 13—16.
[h] Matt. x. 1. Mark vi. 7—12.
[i] Matt. x. 7. [k] Dan. vii. 13, 14.

ing of this, and the like phraſes, in every text of the New Teſtament where they occurr) was at hand[l]:" So Jeſus himſelf preaches in the ſame terms[m], and orders his apoſtles to preach in the very ſame alſo; ſuitably to the prayer he afterwards inſtructed them in, "Thy kingdom come[n]:" and he not only taught, but (as John did) baptized men into the faith "that the Meſſiah was to be made "manifeſt[o]; or, that the kingdom of heaven "was at hand[p]." It is at leaſt moſt probable, that when Chriſt baptized by his diſciples[q], he baptized men into the ſame faith that John Baptiſt did: for it cannot be ſuppoſed, that he ordered his diſciples to baptize them into his own name, as the Meſſiah, when he never publiſhed that he was the Meſſiah himſelf; and forbid his diſciples to divulge it till he was riſen from the dead[r]. We may better underſtand what the apoſtles were commiſſioned to preach, by what St. Mark informs us of the manner in which they executed that commiſſion; which was by "going out, and preaching that men "ſhould repent." Or we may put the account of the commiſſion and of the execution together: and then it will be, that Jeſus ſent

[l] Matt. iii. 1.
[m] Ibid. iv. 17.
[n] Luke xi. 2.
[o] John i. 31.
[p] Matt. iii. 16.
[q] John iii. 22.
[r] Matt. xvi. 20. xvii. 9. Luke ix. 20, 21.

them

them to preach, "that men ſhould repent, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Which is the ſubſtance of what John Baptiſt and Jeſus himſelf had preached before [s]. And as John Baptiſt exhorted men to repentance, by preaching remiſſion of ſins if men did repent [t], it is moſt highly probable, that the doctrine of remiſſion of ſins was then preached by the apoſtles alſo, in virtue of this commiſſion, as the great motive to repentance; and ſeems to be included in what Mark ſhortly ſays, that "they preached that men "ſhould repent."

To give credit to what they ſaid, Chriſt gave them power over all devils and diſeaſes [u]; he gives them this power and authority; or he aſſures them, that when they had faith, or a full perſuaſion, that he would caſt out devils, and heal diſeaſes, on their uſing his name, in confirmation of the truth of the meſſage on which he ſent them, diſeaſes ſhould be healed, and the devils caſt out. Matthew adds to the power of the commiſſion, "to heal the lepers [w];" but that is only ſpecifying one of the diſeaſes to be healed, which, conſidering it in all its circumſtances, was one of the very worſt to which men were at that time ſubject; and which, perhaps, the Jews thought nothing but the

[s] Matt. iii. 1. iv. 17.
[t] Mark i. 5.
[u] Luke ix. 1.
[w] Matt. x. 8.

power of God could heal; and which they expected would be one of the diſeaſes that ſhould be healed in the days of the Meſſiah [x]. He likewiſe adds, "and raiſe the dead." But as Grotius and Mill obſerve, that is not in many manuſcripts, and ſeems not be a part of the text, if we compare it with Matt. x. 1. or with chap. vi. 13.

Jeſus ſending the apoſtles with theſe powers, ſays, "He that receiveth you, receiveth "me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth "him that ſent me [y]." He ſends them with theſe inſtructions, and theſe powers, "to the "loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael" only; expreſſly prohibiting them to go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans [z].

Mark relates how fully they executed the whole of this commiſſion, by telling us, that "they went out and preached that men "ſhould repent: and they caſt out many de-"vils, and anointed with oil many that were "ſick, and healed them [a]." And St. Luke acquaints us, that "they returned, and that "then they told him (Jeſus) all that they "had done [b]." And here this commiſſion ſeems to determine, as being fully executed; for we read no more of their being ſent, or their going out, or returning, or doing any

[x] Vajik Rab. on Lev. xiv. 2. Sank. ii. § 18.
[y] Matt. x. 40.
[z] Ibid. ver. 5, 6.
[a] Mark vi. 12, 13.
[b] Luke ix. 10.

thing

thing but accompanying Jeſus; which they were now to do, fully to anſwer one of the ends for which he ordained them, namely, that they might be with him [c]; to the intent that they might be the better acquainted with "all that Jeſus began to do and teach, until "the day in which he was taken up, after "that he through the Holy Ghoſt had given "commandments unto his apoſtles whom he "had choſen [d]:" and that ſo they might be the better qualified, by "accompanying with "Jeſus all the time that he went in and out "among them, beginning from the baptiſm "of John, unto the day that he was taken "up from them, to be witneſſes of his reſur-"rection;" as St. Peter ſays he muſt be, that was to take the place in the apoſtleſhip, from which Judas by tranſgreſſion fell [e]: therefore our Saviour beſpeaks them thus, in another place, "You have continued with me in my "temptations [f]." And that they had then continued with him for ſome time, we further learn from John xvi. 32. when Jeſus ſays, "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now "come, that ye all ſhall be ſcattered every "man to his own home, and ye ſhall leave "me alone." And to the intent that they might continue with Jeſus, notwithſtanding

[c] Mark iii. 14.
[d] Acts i. 12.
[e] Ibid. ver. 21, 22.
[f] Luke xxii. 28.

the harveſt was great; ſoon after [g] their returning to Jeſus, after the execution of their commiſſion, "the Lord appoints ſeventy "others (ἑτέρους) alſo, and ſent them two and "two, into every city where he himſelf "would come [h];" and then he keeps the twelve conſtantly with him. I the rather think this one reaſon of appointing the ſeventy, becauſe the inſtructions and powers given them are exactly the ſame with thoſe which had been before given to the apoſtles: for they were to preach that "the kingdom of "heaven is come nigh unto you (Jews) [i]: they were to "heal the ſick:" and that they were to "caſt out devils," appears from Luke x. 17. where the ſeventy, on their return, tell him they had caſt them out. And the great agreement that there is in other particulars between theſe two commiſſions, may be ſeen by comparing Luke x. 3—17. Matt. x. 17. and Mark vi. 7—14. This exact agreement between them ſeems to me to ſhew,

[g] The time of the apoſtles giving an account of the execution of their commiſſion, was juſt before the third paſſover Jeſus was at after entering on his public miniſtry. The ſeventy are appointed in his way from Galilee to the laſt feaſt of tabernacles; and ſeem to return to give an account of the execution of their commiſſion at his return from the feaſt. See L'abrégé de L'Hiſtoire Evangel. par Meſſrs. de Beauſob. & L'Enfant, p. 253. 257, 258.

[h] Luke x. 1. [i] Ibid. ver. 10.

that

that the commiſſion to the ſeventy was to ſupply the place of the former to the twelve, after it was determined. Jeſus alſo ſpeaks to the twelve, juſt before his being apprehended, of this their commiſſion, as being fully executed, and ſome time ſince determined; when he ſays to them, "When I ſent you "without purſe and ſcrip, and ſhoes, lacked "ye any thing? and they ſaid, Nothing. "Then ſaid he unto them, But now he that "hath a purſe, let him take it, and likewiſe "his ſcrip: and he that hath no ſword, let "him ſell his garment and buy one [k]." And perhaps their being without any commiſſion, is the reaſon why from the time that they returned to Jeſus, to give an account of the execution of their commiſſion, we never read the name apoſtles made uſe of by the evangeliſts in their goſpels; or even the name of the twelve, till Jeſus is going up to Jeruſalem to ſuffer; and when he begins both to foretell his ſufferings plainly, and to open to them their new commiſſion they were to receive for life, and the powers which were to attend it [l]; and that after he had told them, they ſhould have the power of binding and looſing, juſt as he was going up to Jeruſalem to ſuffer, and then by way of diſtinction of them only. But in other places they are generally, if not always, mentioned under the com-

[k] Luke xxii. 35, 36. [l] Ibid. xvii. 5. xxii. 14.

mon

mon appellation of diſciples, as far as I can remember.

From the time that the apoſtles returned to Jeſus, and told him all that they had done [m], we do not read of their doing any thing but accompanying, or continuing, with Jeſus, and then being ſcattered on his being apprehended [n]; till they being again aſſembled on the firſt day of the week after his crucifixion, the very day that Jeſus roſe from the dead, Jeſus at evening ſtanding in the midſt of them, ſays to them, "as my Father "ſent me, even ſo ſend I you;" and when he had ſaid this, "he breathed on them, and "ſaid, Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt. Whoſe "ſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted unto "them; and whoſe ſoever ſins ye retain, they "are retained [o]:" Chriſt had indeed foretold them, that they ſhould have ſuch powers, a little before his death [p]; but he does but foretell it; as appears from its being ſaid to them in the future tenſe, "Verily, I ſay unto you, "whatſoever ye ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be "bound in heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall "looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven." And though when he now appears to the apoſtles on the day of his reſurrection, and breathes on them, and ſays, in the preſent tenſe, "Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt;" yet he

[m] Luke ix. 10. [n] Matt. xxvi. 31. Mark xiv. 27. John xvi. 32. [o] John xx. 19. 21—24. [p] Matt. xviii. 18.

does

does not then actually communicate it, but only aſſures them, by this viſible ſign, that he will do it, and do it ſoon; and prefigures the manner how he will do it, namely, by the ſound, as it were, of a mighty ruſhing wind [q]. That expreſſions uſed by our Saviour, in the preſent tenſe, ſometimes ſignify a future time only, though but at a ſmall diſtance, may be ſeen John xiii. 31, 32. He gives them the like commiſſion Matt. xxviii. 19. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, "and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt." And Mark xvi. 15. "And he ſaid unto them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the "goſpel unto every creature."

And as the former commiſſion was but a temporary one, and of ſhort continuance; ſo this was never to ceaſe, but with their lives; as we ſhall ſee more fully hereafter.

But though Jeſus gave them their commiſſion for life, in theſe different ways and terms of expreſſion, yet he ſaw fit to reſpite the execution of it, till the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt; for ſo St. Luke expreſſly tells us in his goſpel, that when Jeſus had told the apoſtles, that "repentance and remiſſion "of ſins ſhould be preached in his name "among all nations, beginning at Jeruſa-"lem;" he added, "And behold I ſend

[q] Acts i. 1.

" the promiſe of my Father upon you; but " tarry ye in the city of Jeruſalem until ye " be endued with power from on high [r]:" and ſo Acts i. 4, 5. Jeſus being aſſembled with the apoſtles, " commanded them that they " ſhould not depart from Jeruſalem, but " wait for the promiſe of the Father, which, " ſaith he, ye have heard of me; for John " truly baptized with water, but ye ſhall be " baptized with the Holy Ghoſt not many " days hence." And ver. 8. " And ye ſhall " receive power, after that the Holy Ghoſt " is come upon you; and (then) ye ſhall " be witneſſes unto me both in Jeruſalem, " and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto " the uttermoſt parts of the earth."

After this we find they returned unto Jeruſalem, but continued in their upper room [s] till the Holy Ghoſt came upon them [t], and then firſt began to execute the new commiſſion, which they had received from Chriſt after his reſurrection. Jeſus was " declared " to be the Son of God," the Lord and Heir of all things, when he was raiſed from the dead [u]. But he was not actually inveſted with this ſupreme power till his aſcenſion: ſuitably hereunto Jeſus before his aſcenſion declares [w], that the twelve ſhould be his apoſtles,

[r] Luke xxiv. 50.
[s] Acts i. 12, 13. ii. 1.
[t] Ibid. ii. 23.
[u] Rom. i. 4.
[w] Matt. xxviii. 10.

ſhould

ſhould "go and teach all nations, baptizing "them, &c." but they were not actually to do it till the pouring out of the Holy Ghoſt. The Father had indeed appointed Jeſus a kingdom long before Jeſus had appointed them that kingdom, a little before his ſufferings [x]; but he could not inveſt them with the power that was neceſſary for their adminiſtering it, till he himſelf was inveſted with all power; nor could he ſend forth his miniſters and ambaſſadors till he was exalted to be both Lord and Chriſt; nor endue them with the promiſe of the Father till he had firſt received it: but as ſoon as he was ſeated on David's throne, and had received the promiſe of the Father, and had ſhed down that on his apoſtles which the multitude ſaw and heard on the day of Pentecoſt [y], they immediately began to execute the commiſſion for life which they had received. And thus it was after Chriſt's aſcending up on high, that "he gave gifts unto men: and that he gave "ſome apoſtles as well as ſome prophets, "ſome evangeliſts, and ſome paſtors and "teachers to the church [z]. And as they now firſt began to execute the commiſſion for life, which they had received; ſo they never ceaſed executing it as long as they lived. And from this time forth they are conſtantly diſ-

[x] Luke xxii. 29.
[y] Acts ii. 33.
[z] Eph. iv. 8; 11.

tinguiſhed, by the name of apoſtles, from the other diſciples of Chriſt; from elders and brethren; as well as from prophets, evangeliſts, teachers, and other miniſters of the church.

And now they come to be apoſtles, in the moſt proper and diſtinguiſhing ſenſe of the word: being ſent, not only to the Jews as they were before; but "to all nations [a], and "to every creature [b]; or, as our Saviour ſays Acts i. 8. "to be witneſſes to him in Jeruſa-"lem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, "and to the uttermoſt parts of the earth." Whereas the ſeventy had been ſent before, with as full a commiſſion to all intents and purpoſes, as their firſt commiſſion was; which, though temporary, as the firſt commiſſion of the apoſtles alſo was, yet ſeems to have been of about as long a continuance as the other.

I ſhall therefore only conſider apoſtles as acting under this commiſſion. And the rather, becauſe Matthias, one of the twelve apoſtles of the Jews, and Paul and Barnabas, the only apoſtles of the Gentiles, never had the former commiſſion; and yet were apoſtles as well as the eleven who had had it.

The more general notion of an apoſtle in this view, is, that he is "a ſervant or miniſ-"ter of God, in the kingdom which he has

[a] Matt. xxviii. 19. [b] Mark xvi. 15.

"ſet

" ſet up under Chriſt in the world. The apoſtles being the perſons that were to publiſh the goſpel to all nations, " to bind and " to looſe, and to declare on what terms " man's ſins ſhould be remitted or retained, " and to ſubdue him unto the obedience of " faith." They are in this great diſpenſation of Providence, honoured with the ſtile of the ſervants of God, and of Jeſus Chriſt; who himſelf " is faithful unto him that appointed " him; yet not as a ſervant, as Moſes and " the apoſtles were, but as a Son over the " houſe of God, made alſo by God his own[c]." All the apoſtles whoſe writings are come to our hands, and who, we may be ſure, would not arrogate to themſelves what did not belong to them, take this ſtile upon them; James[d], Peter[e], Jude[f], Paul[g]: and this juſtice the devil was forced to render them in the Pythoneſs, acknowledging Paul and Barnabas " to be the ſervants of the moſt high " God, ſhewing unto men the way of ſalva- " tion[h]."

And inaſmuch as the ſervice they were to render unto God and Chriſt was among thoſe to whom they were to preach, they call themſelves " their ſervants" alſo[i], agreeable to

[c] Heb. iii. 2—7.
[d] James i. 1.
[e] Pet. i. 1.
[f] Jude 6.
[g] Rom. i. 1. Phil. i. 1. Tit. i. 1.
[h] Acts xvi. 17.
[i] 2 Cor. iv. 5.

our

our Saviour's diſcourſe to them, on Zebedee's children aſking the firſt place in his kingdom, ſhewing that the higheſt dignity in his kingdom was the greateſt ſervice and uſefulneſs: "Whoſoever will be great among you, "let him be your ſervant."

And that they were miniſters, we may learn from St. Paul, who ſays of himſelf, and other apoſtles, "let a man ſo account of us "as of the miniſters of Chriſt [k];" and that "Chriſt had made them able miniſters of "the New Teſtament [l]:" and comparing himſelf with the other apoſtles [m], he ſays, "Are they miniſters of Chriſt? I am more." And ſpeaking of the goſpel [n], "Whereof he "was made a miniſter." He ſays the ſame Col. i. 23, 25. Perhaps this ſtile may have been taken from the Old Teſtament; for thus Joſhua was ſtiled Moſes's miniſter [o], and his ſervant [p]; and Eliſha had a ſervant or miniſter [q]: Solomon had his ſervants and miniſters [r]: angels are alſo called God's miniſters or ſervants, executing his commands [s]: "Are "they not all miniſtering ſpirits, ſent forth "for the good of thoſe which ſhall be heirs "of ſalvation [t]?" And accordingly we have

[k] 1 Cor. iv. 1.
[l] 2 Cor. iii. 6.
[m] Ibid. xi. 23.
[n] Eph. iii. 6, 7.
[o] Exod. xxiv. 13.
[p] Numb. xi. 28.
[q] 2 Kings vi. 15.
[r] 2 Chron. ix. 4.
[s] Pſal. ciii. 21.
[t] Heb. i. 7. ii. 23.

ſeveral

ſeveral accounts of their being ſent on great and important errands, in the Old as well as the New Teſtament. Thoſe alſo who have anſwered the great purpoſes of God in the world, and ſerved his pleaſure, have the honour of being ſtiled his ſervants; ſo Job, Jacob, Caleb, David, Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel, have been ſtiled in their time. And thus, in the moſt eminent manner, Moſes is often ſtiled "a ſervant of the Lord," and "my ſervant," by God himſelf, from his being the great inſtrument of delivering his people out of Egypt, conducting them thro' the wilderneſs, and ſettling the divine government among them. All the prieſts and Levites were called "the Lord's miniſters," becauſe they miniſtered to the Lord in holy things. And, indeed, ſervants and miniſters continue to ſignify the ſame thing among ourſelves: thoſe that are called the king's miniſters in England, being called his ſervants in Scotland.

But the apoſtles have not barely the honour of being the ſervants or miniſters of God in the lower ſenſe in which all good men are ſo, doing his will in their ſeveral ſtations; or in which prophets, evangeliſts, paſtors, and teachers, are miniſters in the kingdom of Chriſt[u]: and as

[u] Eph. iv. 11, 12.

" workers of miracles, healers of diſeaſes, " diverſities of tongues, helps and govern- " ments," may be ſaid to be; but in a ſuperlative degree to them all. This appears from their having always the rank given them before the others; as Acts xv. 23. Eph. iv. 11. and from their preſiding conſtantly in all aſſemblies of chriſtians where they were preſent, propoſing, ſpeaking in the names of the aſſembly, and forming the queſtion, Acts i. 15. and v. 6. and 15. but more eſpecially by St. Paul's expreſs aſſertion 1 Cor. xii. 28. where he is ſettling the ranks of the ſeveral miniſters (or rather of the gifts that qualified them for their different miniſtries) in the chriſtian church. For he ſays, " God hath ſet ſome " in the church, firſt apoſtles, ſecondarily " prophets, thirdly teachers, after that, &c." And chriſtians are ſaid by him " to be built " on the foundation of apoſtles and prophets, " Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner- " ſtone[w]." On which account the apoſtles have the high character of ambaſſadors, and of acting in Chriſt's ſtead. St. Paul calls himſelf " an ambaſſador in bonds[x];" and ſpeaking of himſelf in the character of an apoſtle, ſays, " Now then we, as ambaſſadors " for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you " by us, we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye

[w] Eph. ii. 20. [x] Ibid. vi. 20.

" reconciled

"reconciled unto God [y]." On what account this high character is given him, will be better underſtood by what follows.

A man may be ſaid to be a ſervant or miniſter, who takes a ſervice or miniſtry upon him, and whoſe ſervice or miniſtry is accepted; though he be not called to that ſervice or miniſtry, or ſent upon it. But the apoſtles were choſen to their miniſtry or ſervice, and ſent on their meſſage before they went. Jeſus ſaid to them [z], "As my Father ſent me, ſo "ſend I you." As Chriſt was "the ſent of "God," ſo they were "the ſent of Chriſt;" and Jeſus appointed "the kingdom to them, as "the Father had appointed the kingdom unto "him [a]." The kingdom every where in the goſpels ſignifies the ſtate of things put under Chriſt, from his aſcenſion to the conſummation of all things. As God deſigned to adminiſter his kingdom by Chriſt, Chriſt deſigned to adminiſter it through the Spirit, by the apoſtles: and by virtue of the gifts of the Spirit, "they were to ſit on thrones, judging the "twelve tribes of Iſrael [b]."

The firſt, and one of the moſt diſtinguiſhing parts of their character, ſervice, and miniſtry, was "to teſtify and witneſs:" as Jeſus had teſtified of the Father, ſo they were

[y] 2 Cor. v. 20.
[z] John xx. 21.
[a] Luke xxii. 29.
[b] Ver. 30. Matt. xix. 28.

to teſtify of Chriſt. This I think will appear from ſeveral places of ſcripture, in which the end of their appointment is declared, or the manner in which they anſwered it.

Juſt as our Saviour was going to leave his diſciples, he tells them [c], that "when the "Comforter was come, who is the Spirit of "Truth, he ſhould teſtify of him;" and that then "they alſo ſhould bear witneſs of him, "becauſe they had been with him from the "beginning." And after his reſurrection he tells them [d], "And ye are witneſſes of theſe "things." And adds, that after they ſhould receive power, by the Holy Ghoſt coming upon them, "they ſhould be witneſſes unto "him, both in Jeruſalem and in all Judæa, "and in Samaria, and unto the uttermoſt "parts of the earth [e]." Thus far the direction to the apoſtles to witneſs and teſtify was general, and extended to any of the facts of chriſtianity which they had ſeen or heard. And we may well ſuppoſe that the reaſon why the direction was continued in theſe general terms was, becauſe our Saviour's death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, and the ſhedding down of the Holy Ghoſt, the facts which they were chiefly to teſtify, had not yet happened: nor did they then underſtand the great conſequence of thoſe facts, or of their teſtimony about them.

[c] John xv. 26, 27. [d] Luke xxiv. 48. [e] Acts i. 8.

But after the reſurrection of Jeſus from the dead, they underſtood that his reſurrection was to be the chief matter of their teſtimony. And, therefore, when they were met together at Jeruſalem, waiting for the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, and were going to chooſe an apoſtle in the room of Judas, Peter ſays, at the concluſion of his ſpeech to the one hundred and twenty, "Wherefore of theſe men, which have companied "with us all the time that the Lord Jeſus "went in and out among us, beginning from "the baptiſm of John, unto the ſame day "that he was taken up from us, muſt one be "ordained to be a witneſs with us of his "reſurrection[f]." As ſoon as the Holy Ghoſt was fallen on them, Peter preaches to the Hebrew Jews, and ſome religious proſelytes of all nations; and the concluſion of his diſcourſe is, "this Jeſus hath "God raiſed up, whereof we all are witneſſes[g]. And with many other words did "Peter teſtify[h]." And that Peter ſpeaks here in the name of the apoſtles only, ſeems plain not barely from his being the mouth of the apoſtles, but from the people's addreſſing themſelves to Peter and the reſt of the apoſtles, on what Peter had ſaid to them[i], "to know what they ſhould do;"

[f] Acts i. 21, 22.
[g] Ibid. ii. 32.
[h] Ver. 40.
[i] Ver. 47.

and from Peter's replying, "that they ſhould "receive," which amounts to ſaying and we will impart, "the Holy Ghoſt[k]:" which none could impart but the apoſtles. When Peter and John account for the miracle they had wrought on the beggar, to the people[l], they tell them, that they had wrought it by the power of Chriſt, "whom they (the peo-"ple) had ſlain, whom God had raiſed from "the dead; whereof, ſays he, we are witneſſes." The ſame thing they witneſs to the rulers, when they were brought before them, to anſwer by what power they had wrought that miracle; ſaying, "Be it known unto you, "that by the name of Jeſus—whom ye cru-"cified, whom God raiſed from the dead (or "whom we teſtify that he raiſed from the "dead) doth this man (the beggar) ſtand "whole before you[m]." On the council's threatening them, if they taught any more in the name of Jeſus; they anſwer, That "they cannot but ſpeak the things, which "they have ſeen and heard[n];" that is, They cannot but teſtify the reſurrection of Chriſt, whom they had ſeen and heard, after he was riſen from the dead; "He having been ſeen "of them forty days, and ſpeaking of the "things pertaining unto the kingdom of

[k] Acts ii. 38. [l] Acts iii. 14.
[m] Acts iv. 10. [n] Ver. 20.

"God.

"God[o]." After the Holy Ghoſt's falling on the apoſtles, and their company, a ſecond time, the remark that St. Luke makes upon it is, that "with great power gave the "apoſtles witneſs of the reſurrection of the "Lord Jeſus[p]." When the apoſtles were again queſtioned by the council for their continuing to teach in Chriſt's name, they anſwer, "The God of our fathers raiſed up "Jeſus, whom ye ſlew, and hanged on a "tree. Him hath God exalted with his "right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour— "and we are his witneſſes of theſe "things[q]." When Peter and John went down to Samaria, to give the Holy Ghoſt to the Samaritans, on their receiving the goſpel; St. Luke obſerves, "that when they (Peter "and John) had teſtified (or witneſſed) and "preached the word of the Lord, they "returned to Jeruſalem[r]." When Peter goes to convert the firſt-fruits of the proſelytes of the gate to the Chriſtian faith, he ſays, that after the "Jews had ſlain Chriſt, "and hanged him on a tree, him God raiſed "up the third day, and ſhewed him openly; "not to all the people, but unto witneſſes "choſen before of God, even to us, who did "eat and drink with him, after he roſe from

[q] Acts i. 3.
[o] Ibid. v. 30—33.
[p] Ibid. iv. 33.
[r] Ibid. viii. 25.

"the dead[s]." "And he commanded us to "preach to the people, and to teſtify, that it "is he which was ordained of God to be the "Judge of quick and dead[t]." And that he was to be this Judge, they proved by teſtifying that God had raiſed him from the dead; as St. Paul expreſſly does to the Athenians, telling them[u], "that God had appointed a "day, in the which he will judge the world "in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he "hath ordained; whereof he hath given "aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath "raiſed him from the dead."

St. Luke introduces Paul ſpeaking to the Jews[v], and acquainting them, that Ananias told him, that "he ſhould be Chriſt's wit-"neſs unto all men;" and that, when our Saviour appeared to him in the temple, he told him, that the "Jews would not receive "his teſtimony concerning him; but that "he muſt go and bear it to the Gentiles[w]." He likewiſe introduces St. Paul acquainting King Agrippa, that Chriſt ſaid to him, "Riſe, "for I have appeared unto thee for this pur-"poſe, to make thee a miniſter, and a wit-"neſs, both of thoſe things which thou haſt "ſeen, and of the things in the which I will "appear unto thee[x]." In the firſt diſcourſe

[s] See John xxi. 1—16.
[t] Acts x. 40, 41, 42.
[u] Ibid. xvii. 31.
[v] Ibid. xxii. 15.
[w] Ver. 18, 21.
[x] Acts xxvi. 16.

of

of Paul's that we have an account of, he and Barnabas declare to the Jews, and the proſelytes of the gate at Antioch in Piſidia, "that God had raiſed Jeſus from the dead: "and declared it, as well from themſelves [y]," as from thoſe (that is the eleven [z]) "who came "up with him from Galilee to Jeruſalem," and who are ſaid to be "his witneſſes unto "the people [a]." Paul "teſtified to the Jews that "Jeſus was the Chriſt [b];" and tells the elders of the church of Epheſus [c], "that he had teſtified "both to the Jews and to the Greeks:" and adds, that none of the troubles that he foreſaw, moved him from "teſtifying the grace "of the goſpel of Chriſt [d]." And when our bleſſed Lord appeared to him in the caſtle at Jeruſalem, he "bids him be of good chear;" for that "as he had teſtified of him in "Jeruſalem, ſo he ſhould bear witneſs "alſo at Rome [e]." Paul likewiſe declares to King Agrippa, that after "he was ſent to "the Gentiles, he continued witneſſing both "to ſmall and great—that Chriſt ſhould ſuf-"fer, and that he ſhould be the firſt that "ſhould riſe from the dead, and ſhould ſhew

[y] Acts xxiv. 32.
[z] That it was the eleven that came up with Chriſt from Galilee to Jeruſalem, ſee the Abſtract.
[a] Acts xxiv. 31.
[b] Ibid. xviii. 5.
[c] Ibid. xx. 17, 21.
[d] Ver. 24.
[e] Ibid. xxiii. 11.

"light

" light unto the people, and unto the Gen-
" tiles [f]." And when he was come to Rome, according to our Saviour's prediction [g], St. Luke acquaints us, that " he teſtified the " kingdom of God there [h]."

We find St. Peter calls himſelf a " witneſs " of the ſufferings of Chriſt [i];" and tells thoſe to whom he wrote, " that they did not fol-
" low cunningly deviſed fables, when they " made known unto them the power and " coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; but " were eye-witneſſes of his majeſty. For " he received from God the Father, honour " and majeſty, when there came ſuch a voice " from the excellent Glory —— and this " voice —— we heard [k]." And he does not only exhort, but teſtify to the Chriſtians to whom he wrote, " that this was the true " grace of God in which they ſtood [l]." And St. John, an apoſtle as well as a writer of one of the goſpels, ſays, " he that ſaw" (namely the Soldier peirce Jeſus' ſide) " bare " record, and his record is true [m]." And that " he teſtified theſe things," namely, thoſe which are contained in his goſpel, and " wrote " theſe things, and we know that his teſti-
" mony is true [n]:" words not uſed by Mark,

[f] Acts xxvi. 22, 33.
[g] Ibid. xxiii. 11.
[h] Ibid. xxviii. 23.
[i] 1 Pet. v. 1.
[k] 2 Pet. i. 16—19.
[l] 1 Pet. v. 12.
[m] John xix. 35.
[n] Ibid. xxi. 24.

or

or Luke, in their goſpels. And in his epiſtle he ſays, "That which we have heard, "which we have ſeen with our eyes, which "we looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life (for the Life "was manifeſted, and we have ſeen it, and "bear witneſs, and ſhew unto you): that "which we have ſeen and heard declare we "unto you [o]."

And St. Paul ſays [p], that if "Chriſt be not "riſen, then are we (not only he, but all the "reſt of the apoſtles of Chriſt) found falſe "witneſſes, becauſe we have teſtified of God, "that he raiſed up Chriſt, whom he raiſed "not up, if ſo be that the dead riſe not." And he calls the goſpel which he preached to the Corinthians, (the ſame in ſubſtance that the other apoſtles did to others) "the "teſtimony of Chriſt [q]:" and calls it his teſtimony to the Theſſalonians [r]; "the very "teſtimony of our Lord, which he charged "Timothy not to be aſhamed of [s]." I need do no more than barely acquaint the moſt unlearned reader, that it is the very ſame word in the original, which we tranſlate by the two words teſtify and witneſs; and which are in our own language of the ſame import and ſignification.

[o] 1 John i. 2, 3. See chap. iv. 14. Rev. i. 9.
[p] 1 Cor. xv. 15. [q] Ibid. ii. 1.
[r] 2 Theſ. i. 10. [s] 1 Tim. i. 8.

Thus

Thus we ſee, that apoſtles are appointed to teſtify, or witneſs, the reſurrection of Chriſt; but we may obſerve, that though they generally inſiſted on that, as the fact of the greateſt moment, without which the Chriſtian Religion could have no foundation, and which, if once admitted, the reſt would be readily received; yet they do likewiſe at times, and as occaſion required, atteſt the other facts of Chriſtianity: Chriſt's miracles, his transfiguration, his crucifixion, his aſcenſion, and eſpecially his ſhedding down the Holy Ghoſt upon them; as a proof of his reſurrection, and his exaltation at the right hand of God.

And as thus we ſee, that apoſtles teſtify the reſurrection of Chriſt, and the other great facts of Chriſtianity; ſo I muſt add (though I do not know it has been taken notice of) that I cannot find, that any other miniſters do it. Prophets are ſaid to exhort: Barnabas was a prophet, before he was an apoſtle; for he is reckoned among the other prophets in the Church of Antioch [t]; and he is ſaid to have exhorted at Antioch [u]. So likewiſe did Judas and Silas, being prophets, in the very ſame church afterwards [w]. Evangeliſts are ſaid to preach; Philip did ſo

[t] Acts xiii. 1. [u] Ibid. xi. 23.
[w] Ibid. xv. 22.

to

to the Samaritans[x], and to the eunuch[y], and "in ſeveral cities[z]:" and that Philip was an evangeliſt (at leaſt afterwards) we learn from Acts xxi. 8. Others are ſaid to teach, as Apollos[a]; and to feed the church of God (which is a metaphorical expreſſion for teaching, as I have proved in the Firſt Eſſay) as the elders of the church of Epheſus[b]. St. Paul bids Timothy and Titus "teach, preach, reprove, rebuke, exhort[c]". But none but apoſtles are ever, that I can find, ordered or ſaid to teſtify; and it is very remarkable, that though Philip is ſaid to preach in thoſe three ſeveral places, in the 8th chapter of the Acts, that I have juſt now quoted; yet Peter and John are, in that very chapter, ſaid to have teſtified to thoſe very Samaritans, to whom St. Luke is ſo very careful to tell us that Philip only preached.

There were, no doubt, other perſons who ſaw and heard Chriſt after his reſurrection, beſides his apoſtles; he having been ſeen "of Mary Magdalene, of Mary the mother "of James, and of other women[d];" "of "Cleophas, and another[e];" and afterwards "of five hundred brethren at once[f]." And

[x] Acts viii. 5.
[y] Ver. 35.
[z] Ver. 40.
[a] Ibid. xviii. 25.
[b] Ibid. xx. 28.
[c] 1 Tim. iv. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 2. Tit. ii. 15.
[d] Mat. xxviii. 9, 10. Mark xvi. 10. John xx. 14, 15.
[e] Luke xxiv. 13—33.
[f] 1 Cor. xv. 16.

they

they, no doubt of it, might teſtify as they had occaſion. But the apoſtles "muſt needs "teſtify it;" they being appointed and commiſſioned by Chriſt for this purpoſe, as may appear by moſt of the places before quoted, particularly Acts i. 8. when all the Apoſtles are "commanded by Chriſt to become his "witneſſes, after they ſhould be endued with "power from on high." This St. Peter expreſſly aſſerts of the eleven [g]: "That they "were choſen before of God to be his wit-"neſſes" (that is by Chriſt, perhaps on direction from God, after praying all night, to chooſe out of his diſciples, "them to be his "apoſtles [h]);" and adds, "that he command-"ed them to preach and teſtify, that it is he "&c." Therefore, as Peter and John told the council, after being forbid to preach in the name of Jeſus, "they could not but ſpeak "the things that they had ſeen and heard [i]:" and accordingly, when they were queſtioned how they dared to preach in his name after ſo ſtrict an injunction to the contrary, their anſwer is, "We are his witneſſes [k];" (as much as to ſay, What, not teſtify his reſurrection? why this is our buſineſs, and the very office to which we are appointed] "and "ſo is the Holy Ghoſt alſo, which God has

[g] Acts x. 41, 42.
[h] Luke vi. 12, 13.
[i] Acts iv. 20.
[k] Ibid. v. 32.

"given

" given for this purpoſe to them that be-
" lieve."

The perſon that was to fill up Judas's place is expreſſly ſaid [l], to be " ordained for this " purpoſe, that he ſhould be a witneſs toge-" ther with the reſt of the apoſtles." And he is choſen by God, as the reſt of the apoſtles are ſaid to be [m]. For on their prayer to him (Σὺ, Κύριε, καρδιογνώςα πάντων) to ſhew which of the two he had choſen, and giving forth their lots; the lot, in anſwer to their prayer, fell on Mathias [n].

St. Paul likewiſe is choſen by God (as I have obſerved already) and ſent by Chriſt, as St. Luke tells us he informed the Jews [o]. " And I ſaw him (Chriſt) ſaying unto me, " Make haſte, and get thee quickly out of " Jeruſalem, for they will not receive thy " teſtimony concerning me. But depart, for I " will ſend thee far hence to the Gentiles." And St. Luke alſo acquaints us, that St. Paul afterwards told King Agrippa [p], that Chriſt ſaid unto him, " Riſe, and ſtand on thy feet; " for I have appeared unto thee to this end, to " make thee a miniſter, and a witneſs of thoſe " things which thou haſt ſeen, and of thoſe " things in the which I will appear unto " thee; delivering thee from the people, and

[l] Acts i. 22.
[m] Ibid. x. 41.
[n] Ver. 26.
[o] Ibid. xxii. 18, 21.
[p] Ibid. xxvi. 16.

" the

"the Gentiles, unto whom I now ſend thee." And the ſpirit afterwards ordered the Church of Antioch, to ſeparate Barnabas and Saul, "to the work to which he had called them." Perhaps it was alſo by the ſpirit given to Chriſt without meaſure, that he (after prayer all night to God) was directed by God to chooſe the twelve. And ſo, perhaps, it is ſaid that "he choſe the apoſtles by the Holy Ghoſt[q];" which I think, with ſome verſions, is the true conſtruction of the verſe, ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας ἐντειλάμενος τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου οὓς ἐξελέξατο, ἀνελήφθη. But, however that was, we are ſure that ſome way or other the apoſtles were ſent by God and Chriſt, from expreſs aſſertions of ſcripture; and Paul as well as the reſt. And therefore what he ſaid of himſelf belonged to them all, and in relation to their teſtimony as well as their doctrine; "neceſ-"ſity is laid on me, and woe is me, if I preach "not the goſpel[r]."

And as to Barnabas, it is highly probable, that he was ordered by Chriſt to go and teſtify. When Chriſt appeared to Paul in the temple, and bid him to go the Gentiles, then perhaps he ordered him to take Barnabas with him; a Jew born among the Gentiles, as he himſelf was, (the one being born in Cyprus, the other at Tarſus) who had firſt vouched

[q] Acts i. 2. [r] 1 Cor. ix. 16.

him

him to the apoſtles[s]; very likely as being acquainted with him before. Metaphraſtes ſays, he was his fellow-pupil under Gamaliel[t]; and then brought him from Tarſus to Antioch, and there laboured with him for a whole year[u]; and was now his companion in carrying alms from Antioch to Jeruſalem[w]. But, whatever were the reaſons why providence ordered it that he ſhould be called to be an apoſtle, yet I ſuppoſe Saul was ordered by Chriſt, at the time when he appeared to him in the temple, to take Barnabas with him, becauſe[x] "the Holy Ghoſt ſays, ſepa-"rate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, "whereunto I have (already) called them," not that I now barely call them to, by the prophets. Now where can we ſuppoſe God had called Barnabas to this work, previous to the prophecy of the prophets in the church of Antioch, unleſs it was in this appearance to St. Paul in the temple? So likewiſe Paul and Barnabas ſay to the Jews[y]; "Lo we "turn to the Gentiles, for ſo hath the Lord "commanded us." Where but in this viſion? The text, that Paul quotes out of Iſaiah, cannot be that command. It is not preciſe as to the time when the Gentiles ſhould be

[s] Acts ix. 2, 7.
[t] Metaphr. ap. Bar. ad an. 34. num. 262.
[u] Acts xi. 25, 26.
[w] Ver. 29, 30.
[x] Ibid. xiii. 1.
[y] Ver. 43.

preached to; much leſs is there any thing ſo much as hinted, that Saul and Barnabas ſhould do it; and is only quoted by them to the Jews, to ſhew them, that Paul and Barnabas might have received ſuch a command, agreeably to a clear prophecy in their own prophets concerning it. Now Barnabas muſt have been ſent ſome time or other: for that he was an apoſtle is plain, ſince he is expreſſly ſtiled ſo [z]. He is ordered to be ſeparated to the ſame work with St. Paul [a]; he goes along with him to the ſame work; he afterwards thinks fit to part with him, and to go on a ſeparate peregrination among the Gentiles; and to take a miniſter along with him [b]; as Paul and the other apoſtles did. Paul ranks him with himſelf as an apoſtle [c]; and he was acknowledged as an apoſtle by Peter, James, and John, as St. Paul tells the Galatians [d]; he is often called an apoſtle by Clemens Alexandrinus [e]; and ſays, "ſic etiam au-" dit apud pleroſque patres." Jerome ſays, "he " was ordained apoſtle of the Gentiles toge-" ther with Paul [f]." And ſince he was an apoſtle, he muſt have been ſent of God and Chriſt. For it is "God that hath ſet ſome " in the church firſt apoſtles, &c [g]." And of

[z] Acts xiv. 14.
[a] Ibid. xiii. 1.
[b] Ibid. xv. 39.
[c] Cor. ix. 4——7.
[d] Gal. ii. 9.
[e] Strom. lib. ii.
[f] Catal. Vir. Illuſtr. in Barnab.
[g] 1 Cor. xii. 28.

Chriſt

Chriſt, St. Paul (the fellow-apoſtle of Barnabas) ſays, "that he gave ſome apoſtles," &c. This is what has occurred to me towards proving Barnabas an apoſtle, and ſhewing when, and how, he came to be ſo. Which, I hope, will not be wholly unacceptable; being a matter that has ſo little ſaid of it in Scripture, and where I have had no aſſiſtance from any, that I have read on this ſubject.

I hope what I have ſaid here, to ſhew that the apoſtles were particularly commiſſioned and ſent to teſtify the reſurrection of Chriſt, may, in ſome meaſure, account for their being the only perſons, who are ſaid to witneſs, or teſtify it. But I am ſenſible, this will account for that character of theirs but in part. However, I hope under its proper head, before I conclude this Eſſay, to give my reader full ſatisfaction concerning it.

Thus it appears, that the apoſtles were ſent by God to teſtify the reſurrection of Chriſt, and were the only perſons ſaid in ſcripture to be ſent by God for that purpoſe. Now that they might be capable of giving their teſtimony, it was neceſſary "that they ſhould "have ſeen and heard our Lord after his re-"ſurrection;" that ſo they might be eye and ear-witneſſes of his being raiſed from the dead. The eleven had ſeen and heard him after his reſurrection, as St. Luke particularly acquaints

us[h]. And Peter ſays, when they were to chooſe one in Judas's room, that "out of thoſe "men which have companied with us, all the "time that the Lord Jeſus went in and out "among us, beginning from the baptiſm of "John unto the ſame day that he was taken "up from us, muſt one be ordained to be a "witneſs with us of his reſurrection[i]." So that from hence it appears, that Matthias had ſeen and heard our Lord, after his reſurrection, as well as the eleven. St. John in his firſt epiſtle ſays very expreſſly to this purpoſe[k], "That which we [apoſtles] have "ſeen with our eyes, which we have looked "upon, and our hands have handled of the word "of life. — That which we have ſeen and "heard, declare we unto you." And to the ſame purpoſe likewiſe St. Paul ſays of himſelf, "Am not I an apoſtle? have I not ſeen Jeſus "Chriſt our Lord[l]?" And[m] "that he deli-"vered unto them (the Corinthians) that "which he firſt received; how that Chriſt "died for our ſins, according to the ſcriptures; "and that he was buried, and that he roſe "again the third day, according to the ſcrip-"tures: and that he was ſeen of Cephas—— "and laſt of all that he was ſeen of him alſo, "as of one born out of due time. For he

[h] Acts i. 2—5.
[i] Ver. 21, 22.
[k] ver. 1. 3.
[l] 1 Cor. ix. 1.
[m] Ibid. xv. 3—10.

"was

" was the leaſt of the apoſtles, that was not " meet to be called an apoſtle, becauſe he " perſecuted the church of God."

And as to Barnabas, it is moſt likely that he was one of the ſeventy: and it is moſt likely that all the ſeventy ſaw our Saviour after his reſurrection. It is alſo moſt likely that all the ſeventy were part of the one hundred and twenty. They were of thoſe who had companied with our Saviour from the beginning. And who were ſo likely as they to be with the apoſtles at Jeruſalem after what had befallen their Maſter ſo lately there? none after the apoſtles were equally concerned in the great events of his reſurrection and aſcenſion. But however that be, Barnabas is in both the liſts that the primitive fathers give us of the ſeventy [n]. So that Barnabas had, in all probability, ſeen our Saviour after he roſe from the dead. He is mentioned by St. Luke [o], preſently after Chriſt's aſcenſion, as ſo eminent in the church as to have been ſurnamed by the apoſtles, Barnabas, that is, the ſon of conſolation; or, perhaps, of exhortation, as we ſhall ſee preſently. But however that is, he is ſaid to be " full of the Holy Ghoſt [p];" a phraſe that I hope I have made appear, in the Firſt Eſſay, is not uſed of any, but ſuch on whom the Holy

[n] Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. ii. p. 410. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. i. c. 12. & ii. c. 1, and Epiph. Heræſ. 19 n. 4.
[o] Acts iv. 36. [p] Ibid. xi. 24.

Ghoſt fell, without the laying on of hands. He is reckoned the firſt of all the prophets [q]. That rank, perhaps, denotes Barnabas to be one of the hundred and twenty, who had companied with the eleven, all the time that Chriſt went in and out among them; who were, if I miſtake not, called the apoſtles company [r].

I ſay this upon the ſuppoſition, that Barnabas is not the ſame with Barſabas, mentioned Acts i. 23. For if he be the ſame, he muſt have been one of the hundred and twenty, who had accompanied with them from John's baptiſm, ver. 21. and conſequently muſt have ſeen Chriſt after his reſurrection. And, indeed, it appears to me highly probable, that Barſabas, Acts i. 23. is the ſame with Barnabas, Acts iv. 36. becauſe their name is the ſame in ſome copies: for, 1, Barſabas, who is called Joſeph in ſome copies, is called Joſes in others; the ſame name given to Barnabas, Acts iv. 36. As on the other hand, Barnabas, Acts iv. 36. commonly called Joſes in the generality of copies, is yet called Joſeph in ſome approved ones. So Jerome ſays "Barnabas of Cyprus called "alſo Joſeph the Levite [s]." Indeed the names Joſes and Joſeph in the Hebrew are the ſame [t].

[q] Acts xiii. 1. [r] Ibid. iv. 23. and Luke xxiv. 33.
[s] Catal. Vir. Illuſtr. in Barnab.
[t] See Epiſcop. in Act. i. 23. Heræ Hebr. & Talm. Imp. in Act. Apoſt.

2. Bar-

2. Barſabas, Acts i. 23. is in ſome copies called Barnabas; and Barnabas, Acts iv. 36. is in ſome copies called Barſabas [u]. It is plain, Clemens Alexandrinus and Euſebius were of this opinion; who, as the reſt of the fathers, muſt be allowed to be of conſiderable authority in a matter of fact ſo much nearer their time than ours. And though our countryman Bede calls their authority in queſtion, in this matter, in Act. iv. yet I think he does it without ſufficient ground. For St. Luke [w] does not intimate that Barnabas then firſt came to the apoſtles, or that he came after the aſcenſion of Chriſt; ſo much as that he then ſold his poſſeſſions. Our moſt Reverend Metropolitan Abp. Wake ſeems to incline to Bede's opinion, and offers what is much more conſiderable than Bede does, to ſupport it. For his Grace obſerves, in his "preliminary diſ-"courſe to the genuine epiſtles of the antient "fathers [x], that Barnabas is called a Levite "of Cyprus in this place; whereas it would "have been more for his honour to have "been mentioned as one of the ſeventy, if he "had been one." This, I confeſs, would have have had great weight with me, if I had found one ſingle inſtance in the Acts, or Epiſtles, where that character had been given to any. And I apprehend, the reaſon why

[u] See Mill. in loc. [w] Acts iv. 36.
[x] P. 61.

it never is given to any is, that that commiſſion was but temporary: as plainly appears by the commiſſion itſelf, which was only "to go into thoſe cities where Chriſt himſelf "was to come[y];" and by their returning to our Saviour, and giving him an account how they had executed it. After which he does not renew it[z]. And Barnabas is called a Levite of Cyprus, becauſe his poſſeſſions which he ſold, and which is the ſubject of the hiſtory, lay in that iſland[a]; and perhaps alſo to intimate to us, that he, who was to be the apoſtle of the Gentiles, was born on Gentile ground. His Grace too obſerves, what I think is more conſiderable to this purpoſe[b], "that the name of Barnabas, or ſon "of conſolation, ſeems to be firſt given "him by the apoſtles[c]," on the occaſion of his giving ſo largely to the community of goods. I would, at leaſt, conſider what his Grace ſays there, as an objection to the opinion of antiquity, and which I eſpouſe; though I cannot ſay, he brings it with that view. But leſt that ſhould ſtick with any one, though it may not have been alledged by his Grace, with a deſign to corrobarate Bede's opinion; I would take liberty to offer this by way of anſwer: 1. That ὑὸς παρακλή-

[y] Luke x. 17.
[z] Ver. 17.
[a] Acts iv. 36.
[b] P.
[c] Acts iv. 36.

σεως

σεως may signify the son of exhortation, rather than of comfort and consolation; so παράκλησις is expressly used[d]; and distinguished from παμυθία, comfort or consolation. And this agrees not only with his character in general, as a prophet; but with his particular character in the Acts[e]. Now if υἱὸς παρακλήσεως signifies son of exhortation, and not of consolation, the force of this objection entirely vanishes. But, 2, if it ought to be translated as our translators have rendered it, yet considering the Acts was written many years after most of the transactions it contains; the Levite of Cyprus, whose name was Joses, and who, after his selling his estate in that island, was surnamed Barnabas (and universally known to the whole church by that name) might have that name given him by St. Luke[f], by way of anticipation. If upon the whole it shall appear, that Barnabas was one of the two put to the lot[g], it is then plain, that he had seen our Lord after his resurrection, as well as the rest of the apostles; and was consequently qualified, on that account, to testify the resurrection of Christ, as well as they.

But though he and the rest of the apostles were to testify the resurrection of Christ, yet that was not all they were now to do. As Jesus came from God to reveal so much of the

[d] Rom. xii. 8. 1 Cor. xiv. 3. [e] Acts xi. 23.
[f] Ibid. i. 23. [g] Ibid.

will

will of the Father as he had received a commandment to do; ſo they were to reveal the mind of Chriſt, and to "inſtruct the world "in the whole knowledge and myſtery of his "religion, from Chriſt the teacher of it." They had taught under their firſt commiſſion, "that men ſhould repent, becauſe the king-"dom of heaven was at hand;" but, perhaps, then added nothing to what they had literally heard out of the mouth of their great Maſter. Whilſt he was with them, they could have conſtant recourſe to him for freſh inſtruction or direction as they wanted it, as he himſelf intimates to them [h]. They were therefore as yet but his echo. But now they were to have "a mouth and wiſdom of their own," according to Chriſt's promiſe [i] (as we ſhall ſee more fully preſently); and were to teach the whole chriſtian ſcheme to mankind. Perhaps in this they bore an analogy to their great Lord and Maſter, who firſt had the ſpirit of God abiding with him as a prophet, "could "of himſelf do nothing; but as he heard, ſo he "judged [k];" or, as he ſays in another place, "as the Father taught him [l]:" for "it was "the Father that dwelt in him [by his Spirit] "that did the work [m]." Whilſt he was upon earth he ſaid "no man could come unto him

[h] John xiv. 25.
[i] Luke xxi. 15.
[k] John v. 30.
[l] Ibid. viii. 28.
[m] Ibid. xiv. 10.

"except

" except the Father wich ſent him drew him," namely by his Spirit. But he ſays that " if " he be lifted up, then he will draw all men " after him;" namely, by his ſpirit which he ſhould receive from the Father on praying to him in virtue of the ſacrifice he had offered up. But after he was " ſeated on his throne, " and anointed with the oil of gladneſs above " his fellows,"; in him were hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, and having received the promiſe of the Father, he ſhed down the Holy Ghoſt on his diſciples. Chriſt indeed had inſtructed his apoſtles in the chriſtian ſcheme more fully, after their returning to him upon having executed their firſt commiſſion; teaching them as much as they could well bear before his death. After his reſurrection, he was with them forty days, " ſpeaking the things pertaining to the king- " dom of God [n]." But it was after his aſcenſion, as he foretold, that he ſent down the Spirit upon them, who was " to lead them into " all truth [o]," " to teach them all things [p];" " to bring all things to their remembrance, " that Jeſus had ſaid unto them [q];" " and to " take of the things of the father, and ſhew " them unto them, and to abide with them [r]." By this they " became able miniſters of the

[n] Acts i. 3.
[o] John xvi. 13.
[p] Ibid. xiv. 26.
[q] Ibid.
[r] Ibid. xiv. 16.

" New

" New Teſtament; not of the letter, but of " the ſpirit[s]." The Holy Spirit came down on the one hundred and twenty; among whom was Matthias, as well as the other eleven. St. Paul was inſtructed in the knowledge of the Goſpel that he taught, immediately by Chriſt, as he aſſures us[t]: " But I " certify you, brethren, that the Goſpel which " was preached of me is not after man. For " I neither received it of man, neither was I " taught it, but by the revelation of Jeſus " Chriſt." And as to Barnabas, he was not only one of the ſeventy, but alſo, in all likelihood, one of the one hundred and twenty, on whom the Holy Ghoſt fell, without the intervention of hands. And he was a " teach- " er, and a prophet, and full of the Holy " Ghoſt," as I have obſerved before.

Now this knowledge of the whole ſcheme of the chriſtian religion is that which St. Paul calls " the word of wiſdom," committed by the ſpirit to the miniſters of the higheſt rank in the church[u]. This I have conſidered, in the Firſt Eſſay, as the higheſt of all the gifts of the ſpirit; and have ſaid enough there, if I miſtake not, to induce an attentive reader to infer, that it was a gift peculiar to an apoſtle. My deſign led me to ſay ſo much to this purpoſe in that Eſſay. I

[s] 2 Cor. iii. 6. [t] Gal. i. 11, 12.
[u] 1 Cor. xii. 8. 28, 29.

will

will add another conſideration here, which, I think, will remove any doubt that can remain with the candid; which is this, that the apoſtles are called "wiſe men;" as will appear by comparing Luke xi. 49. with Matt. xxiii. 34. For thoſe that are called apoſtles in the firſt place, are called "wiſe men" in the ſecond: and, no doubt, on account of this word of wiſdom that was to be committed to them. And, therefore, when Peter ſpeaks of the epiſtles which Paul had written, he ſays, "according to the wiſdom given unto "him[w]." This is perhaps what Polycarp alludes to in his epiſtle, when he ſays "that "none could attain unto the wiſdom of St. "Paul, who had written epiſtles to them[x]." I think this word of wiſdom is what he (Paul) calls revelation, as it relates to himſelf; becauſe it was all communicated to him by "the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt[y]." For, ſays he, "I neither received it of man, nor was I "taught it, but by the revelation of Jeſus "Chriſt." And he ſpeaks in the ſame ſtrain to the Epheſians[z], where, ſpeaking of the Goſpel which he preached to the Gentiles, he ſays, how that by "revelation it was made "known unto me." And ſo likewiſe to the Romans[a]. "To him that has power to eſ-

[w] 2 Pet. iii. 15.
[x] Epiſt. § 2, 3.
[y] Gal. i. 12.
[z] Eph. iv. 3.
[a] Rom. xvi. 25.

"tabliſh

"tabliſh you according to the goſpel, ac-
"cording to the revelation of the myſtery,
"which was kept ſecret from ages, but now
"is made manifeſt, &c." For this reaſon it is that he places revelation in the firſt place, and immediately preceding knowledge [b].

To the apoſtles likewiſe was committed "the word of knowledge;" by which I underſtand not barely the diſcovery or revelation of things concealed before ſuch diſcovery or revelation; but a diſcovery, or revelation of ſome future event that was very great and important, and that related to the ſtate of the whole church; and is from thence called a myſtery: a name uſually, if not always, given to the revelation of a thing future, that is of the greateſt moment to the church. And ſo the word of knowledge, or the higher gift of prophecy, is to be diſtinguiſhed from that branch of lower prophecy, which is generally denoted by prophecy in the New Teſtament; and which ſignifies the foretelling of ſome leſſer future event, diſcerning of ſpirits, and the performing ſome public acts of worſhip, by the gifts of the ſpirit [c]. I have given my reaſon for underſtanding the word of knowledge thus in the Firſt Eſſay. All that I have here to do is, to ſhew, that this word of knowledge, thus underſtood, was committed to the apoſtles. Now thus we

[b] 1 Cor. xiv. 6. [c] See p. 54.

ſee

ſee in fact it was. Our Saviour had foretold them ſeveral great events relating to the kingdom of God before his death; theſe were ſome of thoſe things which the Spirit "was to bring "to their remembrance," and which he who was to lead into all truth, and to teach them all things, was to inſtruct them in more fully. But his farther office alſo was "to ſhew them "things to come[d]." And thus after Chriſt's aſcenſion we accordingly ſee that apoſtles and prophets are mentioned as the ſame men[e]; and to them as prophets are theſe myſteries in fact revealed. The myſtery of calling the devout Gentiles was committed to Peter[f]; and the myſtery of calling the idolatrous Gentiles to the full communion of the chriſtian church, to Paul[g]. The calling of the idolatrous Gentiles in the manner he called them, without ſubjecting them to any of the laws of Moſes, was the peculiarity of his goſpel. And this having been a myſtery, till it was revealed to him, is the reaſon why St. Paul ſo often calls his goſpel a myſtery[h]: whilſt the word of wiſdom which was committed to him was the ſame that was committed to the reſt of the apoſtles; being the goſpel, which they as well as he preached in common to "Jews

[d] John xvi. 13.
[e] Rom. xvi. 25, 26. Eph. ii. 20.
[f] Acts, chap. x. [g] See the Third Eſſay.
[h] Rom. xvi. 25. Eph. i. 9. iii. 9. Coloſſ. i. 25. ii. 27.

"and Gentiles, Barbarian, Scythian, bond "and free." I have had occaſion to ſpeak a little more fully of the diſtinction between the goſpel of St. Paul and the other apoſtles, in the Preface; to which I beg leave to refer my reader, as alſo to what I ſhall have occaſion to add farther, before I conclude this head. Beſides this myſtery, there was alſo revealed to Paul, the "myſtery of caſting off "and of recalling the Jews [i];" and "the "myſtery of iniquity [k];" and to St. John, "the myſtery of the beaſt [l]," as well as divers other myſteries contained in the book of the Revelations. Thus, while ſome leſſer future events were revealed to prophets of a lower order, as a dearth [m] and "the binding of St. Paul at Jeru- "ſalem" to Agabus [n]; and the "foretelling "who ſhould be proper perſons to be employ- "ed in the ſervice of the church," to others [o]; which branch of lower prophecy I have conſidered more fully in the Firſt Eſſay; the revelation of theſe greater events, relating to the ſpreading, corrupting, or reſtoring the chriſtian religion, was given to the apoſtles. For as we ſee they had this ſort of revelation, in divers inſtances; ſo we do not find any inſtance of it was ever made to any of the other prophets, or miniſters of the church.

[i] Rom. xi. 12.
[k] 2 Theſſ. ii. 7.
[l] Rev. x. 7.
[m] Acts xi. 28.
[n] Acts xxi. 11.
[o] Acts xiii. 1. and 1 Tim. i. 14.

The

The word of wiſdom and the word of knowledge ſeem to have been that high illumination which was peculiar to an apoſtle; how far this excelled the revelation to all other prophets, even to Moſes himſelf, may be ſeen in the Firſt Eſſay, where I had an eye chiefly to the illumination of apoſtles.

If it be objected, that ſuch diſcoveries and revelations as theſe are of the prophetic, and not of the apoſtolic kind; of how high a prophetic kind ſoever they may be: I agree that it is ſo. But as theſe were revelations, that we do not find were ever made to any of the New Teſtament prophets, that were not at the ſame time apoſtles, it comes to the ſame thing. So that the word of knowledge may be as truely ſaid to have been only committed to the apoſtles, as the word of wiſdom.[q]

Under this word of knowledge I likewiſe think the "underſtanding the full ſcope and "intent of the law, the prophets, the types "and allegories," is comprehended [p], of which Peter's diſcourſes are full (particularly that which immediately followed the firſt deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt [q]); and Paul's alſo to the Jews; of which he has given us a ſtrong inſtance, in his epiſtle to the Hebrews. Nor do we find any inſtance of this ſort of

[p] See the Firſt Eſſay. [q] Acts xi. 29—37.

knowledge recorded of other miniſters of the church.

It is from theſe two gifts of the ſpirit, namely, the word of wiſdom and knowledge, which were peculiar to the apoſtles, that I apprehend, the "power of binding and looſ-"ing;" and the "power of remitting and re-"taining ſins" (foretold to them by Jeſus[r]), "did flow." They exerciſed theſe powers, by declaring all men bound to faith and repentance, love and charity, temperance and righteouſneſs: by declaring the Jews, after their converſion to chriſtianity, bound to obey the laws of Moſes, and the proſelytes of the gate to four of them; and the idolatrous Gentiles free, or diſcharged from all of them: not being civil laws to them, as they were, in ſome ſenſe, to the Jews, and to the proſelytes of the gate: they declared all men bound to the laws of the country where they lived, and to domeſtic and relative duties in the Lord: they declared, that on theſe terms men's ſins were remitted; and that, if they led a life contrary to theſe rules, their ſins were retained: they declared, that the Jews and proſelytes of the gate were releaſed from all the laws of Moſes, as the terms of juſtification and eternal life; whilſt they declared them bound to them, as the laws of their country; and

[r] Mat. xviii. 18. John xx. 23.

the

the terms of enjoying the privileges of Jews, or of proſelytes of the gate.

It is of conſequence to obſerve, that the word of wiſdom, and the word of knowledge, which the apoſtles taught, together with the power of binding and looſing, and remitting and retaining ſins, came to them "directly from Chriſt, or the Spirit of Chriſt." Chriſt and his Spirit alone taught them: they did not learn from others. St. Paul lays great ſtreſs upon it, that even the "other "apoſtles added nothing to him[s];" ſo careful is he to let us know, that though he was moſt liable of any of the apoſtles, to the ſuſpicion of learning his goſpel from others; yet that he learned nothing of it even from the apoſtles of the circumciſion themſelves; who were the teachers of all, but of the Gentiles; of whom he was the teacher himſelf[t].

But it is certain that, beſides the knowledge which the apoſtles had by immediate illumination, they gained ſtill farther knowledge by deduction and inference from that illumination. The former they deliver as that which they had received from the Lord, or as what the Spirit ſaith. But as the latter had a mixture of their own reaſoning in it, they do not deliver that with the authority they do the other. Under this head I ſhould rank what Paul ſays he ſpeaks "by permiſſion," or as

[s] Gal. ii. 6. [t] See Irenæus, l. iii. c. 13.

one that thinks "he has the Spirit of God [u]," or when he ſays, "they, that is, the apoſtles, "ſpake from comparing ſpiritual things with "ſpiritual [w];" for I cannot ſuppoſe with ſome very learned men [x], that the only diſtinctions Paul makes in the 1 Cor. vi. and 2 Cor. viii. is between what Chriſt expreſſly taught in his life-time, and what the Spirit taught after its deſcent. For ſure Paul could not have ſaid, "this ſay I, and not the Lord," if the Spirit of the Lord ſaid ſo. Nor could he in that caſe ſay, "I have no commandment, "but I give my advice." Is what he received from the Spirit no commandment? and is it but bare advice? If he had them from the Spirit they were of equal authority with what Chriſt had ſaid himſelf, which was but by the ſame Spirit: and if it was not ſo, Jeſus could not have ſaid that the Spirit ſhould ſupply his abſence, and in ſuch a manner as to give them more light and inſtruction, as well as more power and courage, than if Chriſt had ſtaid with them; as he plainly does [y]: and as the apoſtles ſometimes ſpeak by inference, ſo ſometimes they ſpeak from a plain quotation [z].

It likewiſe very well deſerves our notice, that as Chriſt, or the Spirit, were the only

[u] See 1 Cor. vi. 10. 12. 25. 40. 2 Cor. viii. 8. 10.
[w] 1 Cor. xi. 13 [x] See Mill. Proleg. p. 3. 15.
[y] John xv. 15, 16. [z] 1 Cor. vii. 10.

teachers

teachers of the apoſtles; ſo were "they of all "chriſtians:" being the fountains of all that divine knowledge which chriſtians ever had, or ſhall have, in that or any ſubſequent age of the world; either in relation to the doctrines or the myſteries of the goſpel; other than what was taught by Jeſus himſelf. It is of theſe apoſtles alone, that he ſays, "as my "Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you [a];" and he prays for all believers under theſe two heads, namely, "his apoſtles and them that "ſhould believe through their word [b]," for "the word did but begin to be ſpoken by the "Lord, it was chiefly confirmed by thoſe "who heard him [c]." And he that deſpiſed (the precepts, namely, referred to in the verſes preceding the 8th, given by the apoſtle) deſpiſed "not man, but God; who had given them "his holy Spirit. [d]" Thus the whole of the chriſtian religion (beſides what our Saviour taught) being nothing but the teſtimony, teaching, and the predictions of the apoſtles, confirmed by the Spirit, (ſometimes called the Spirit of prophecy [e]; we (as the Epheſians were) are built on the "foundation of the "apoſtles and prophets [f];" ſuch New Teſtament prophets, as were at the ſame time alſo apoſtles. For the Epheſians were Gentiles,

[a] John xx. 21. xvii. 18.
[b] Ibid. xvii. 20.
[c] Heb. ii. 3.
[d] 1 Theſſ. iii. 8.
[e] Rev. xix. 10.
[f] Eph. ii. 20.

and could not be ſaid to be built on the prophets of the Old Teſtament. They were chriſtians, in all probability, before they knew any thing of the writings of thoſe prophets. But they were built "on thoſe prophets," to whom St. Paul ſays [f], it was "revealed by "the Spirit, that the Gentiles ſhould be fel-"low-heirs, and of the ſame body, and par-"takers of his (God's) promiſe in Chriſt by "the goſpel; which in other ages had not "been made known to the ſons of men." For which reaſon prophets are here put after apoſtles, though immediately after them, as the New Teſtament prophets of the higheſt rank always are [g]; whereas, in all probability, if Old Teſtament prophets had been meant, as they were firſt in time, they would have been put firſt here too. So likewiſe St. Paul ſays to the Romans, that "the myſtery which "was kept ſecret ſince the world began, but "now is made manifeſt by the ſcriptures of "the prophets" (that is, by the writings of ſuch apoſtolical prophets as himſelf, particularly ſuch epiſtolary writings as theſe to the Romans), "according to the commandment "of the everlaſting God (was) made known "to all nations for the obedience of faith [h]." And becauſe the compleat diſcovery of the goſpel, is nothing but the teſtimony and preaching of the apoſtles; as it follows on the

[f] Eph. iii. 5, 6. [g] Ibid. iv. 11. and 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29.
[h] Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

one

one hand, that if their teſtimony and preaching is true, the goſpel is true; ſo it follows alſo on the other (as St. Paul does not ſcruple to affirm) that if "they (the "apoſtles) are found falſe witneſſes, and their "preaching is vain; then is our faith vain, "and we are yet in our ſins[i]."

Nor were the apoſtles only the fountains of divine knowledge to the bulk, or the lower ranks, of chriſtians, but to "the higheſt or-"ders of them:" none of them all received any immediate revelations concerning the nature, doctrine, or laws of Chriſt's kingdom themſelves; but deriving all the knowledge they had of them from theſe firſt miniſters, and ambaſſadors of the Moſt High. The twelve apoſtles were repreſented in the revelations as the twelve foundations of the wall of the new Jeruſalem[k]. But Timothy, an evangeliſt, and a pillar in the houſe of God, was to teach what he "had learnt of an apoſtle[l]". And Apollos, an eminent teacher, was not even inſtructed by Paul at firſt, but by Aquila and Priſcilla, who had been inſtructed by Paul. And this, perhaps, is the reaſon, why Providence ordered it ſo, that the one hundred and twenty, and others to a great number, ſhould continue at Jeruſalem for near a year; and that nothing ſhould drive them thence during that time; namely, that they might,

[i] 1 Cor. xv. 14—18. [k] Rev. xxi. 14.
[l] 2 Tim. ii. 2. and iii. 14.

by hearing the apoſtles, who preached the word inceſſantly, be ſo fully inſtructed in the chriſtian ſcheme, as to be able to teach others; and then Providence directs a ſtorm to ariſe, that ſhould ſcatter them all (but the apoſtles) in order to their preaching the word elſewhere [m], though with this diſtinction, that as the apoſtles preached the "word of God [n]," that is, the word that came to them directly from God, even in a higher ſenſe than the Old Teſtament prophets, or John Baptiſt did: ſo all others only preached the word of the apoſtles. For it was through "their word "that the world was to believe [o]." And as the apoſtles had the fulneſs of wiſdom, and high degrees of prophetic knowledge, they not only teſtified in order to make diſciples; but wrote "epiſtles to them, whom they "had made ſo," in order to the inſtructing them more fully in the doctrine and myſteries of the chriſtian religion. They ſent likewiſe "evangeliſts, with full inſtructions to finiſh "what was wanting [p]." And the things which they had communicated to thoſe evangeliſts, thoſe evangeliſts "were to com-"mit to faithful men, who ſhould be able to "teach others alſo;" as St. Paul directly

[m] Acts viii. 14. xi. 19.

[n] 1 Theſ. ii. 13. and in divers other places,

[o] John xvii. 20. Concerning this word of the apoſtles, the following texts may be conſulted, Rom. x. 18. 2 Theſſ. iii. 14. Jude 17.

[p] 1 Tim. i. 3, 4. Tit. i. 5.

charges

charges Timothy to do [q]. And thus Clement ſays, in his epiſtle to the Corinthians [r], "the apoſtles have preached to us from our "Lord Jeſus Chriſt: Jeſus Chriſt from God. "Chriſt therefore was ſent by God, the apoſ- "tles by Chriſt. So both were orderly ſent "according to the will of God. For the "apoſtles receiving their commands, having "a full confidence through the reſurrection "of our Lord Jeſus, and faith in the word "of God, and a fulneſs of the Holy Spirit, "went forth publiſhing the goſpel of the "kingdom which ſhould come. And preach- "ing through countries and cities, they ap- "pointed the firſt fruits of their converſation "to be biſhops and deacons over ſuch as "ſhould afterwards believe, having firſt proved "them by the Spirit."

And foraſmuch as the fulneſs of chriſtian knowledge was to be derived from the apoſtles, it was neceſſary, in order to their bearing their teſtimony to the great facts of chriſtianity, and for the ſpreading the knowledge of the whole ſcheme of its doctrines in the world, that they ſhould be endued with a "ſuperior degree of boldneſs and utterance:" that ſo they might never want reſolution to teſtify, to teach, and to foretel theſe great events, before the greateſt perſonages, and in

[q] 2 Tim. ii. 2. [r] § 42.

the

the greateſt danger; nor a readineſs in delivering themſelves on all occaſions.

Our Saviour acquaints the twelve [s], that though they "ſhould be brought before "councils, kings, and governors, yet they "need not take any thought, or have fear "or concern about it; for that the Spirit "ſhould give them in that hour what to "ſay [t];" or, as he elſewhere expreſſes it [u], "That he would give them a mouth and "wiſdom, which all their adverſaries ſhould "not be able to reſiſt or gainſay." He likewiſe promiſed the Holy Ghoſt as their Comforter, in his abſence, and who ſhould make them bolder than his preſence with them had ever done [v]. According to this promiſe, immediately after the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, Peter and the eleven (inſtead of keeping any longer in their upper room, where they uſed "to "meet privately with the doors ſhut, for fear "of the Jews [w]," ſpeak openly to the multitude that came together (probably in the temple, at the time of the feaſt [x]). After this, Peter and John ſpeak to the people with great boldneſs and majeſty, pertinency and propriety [y]; and to the council [z]. Inſomuch that the council, "perceiving the boldneſs of

[s] Matt. x. 17—20.
[t] See alſo Mark xiii. 11. and Luke xii. 11.
[u] Luke xxi. 15. [v] John xiv. 16, 18. xv. 26, 27.
[w] Ibid. xx. 19. [x] Acts ii. 6.
[y] Ver. 12—47. [z] Ibid. iv. 8—13.

"Peter

"Peter and John, marvelled, and took "notice that they had been with Jeſus." And it is obſerved by St. Luke, that this boldneſs was an effect of their being filled with the Holy Ghoſt[a], for he ſays, "then "Peter being filled with the Holy Ghoſt, ſaid "unto them, &c." And after the remarkable prayer they made to God for boldneſs, on their firſt being threatened by the council[b], it is alſo obſerved by St. Luke, that in anſwer to that prayer, they were "all filled with the "Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake the word with bold-"neſs[c]." The firmneſs of Peter and the reſt of the apoſtles is remarkable[d]; and we are told[e], that "they departed from the preſence "of the council, rejoicing, that they were "counted worthy to ſuffer for his name." St. Luke acquaints us, that "Paul and Bar-"nabas waxed bold at Antioch[f], and ſpake "boldly for a long time at Iconium[g]." And we find them do ſo on every occaſion, where their diſcourſes are recorded, with great courage and energy, and with a great flow of ſuitable expreſſions. And St. Luke informs us, that "Paul preached the kingdom of "God—with all confidence" (or boldneſs, μετὰ πάσης παῤῥησίας) during the two years he dwelt at Rome[h].

[a] Acts iv. 8.
[b] Ver. 24—31.
[c] Ver. 36—42.
[d] Ibid. v. 29—33.
[e] Ver. 41.
[f] Ibid. xiii. 46.
[g] Ibid. xiv. 3.
[h] Ibid. xxviii. 31.

I do

I do not find that this boldneſs (παῤῥησία) is predicated of any but the apoſtles, beſides Apollos, who is ſaid "to begin to ſpeak "boldly in the ſynagogue, whilſt he was "only inſtructed in the baptiſm of John [i]," Οὗτός τε ἤρξατο παῤῥησιάζεσθαι ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ. But though παῤῥησία generally ſignifies boldneſs, yet it ſometimes ſignifies the open or public manner in which any thing is done. And thus our tranſlators have juſtly rendered ἐν παῤῥησίᾳ "openly [k]," "There is no man that "doeth any thing in ſecret, and he himſelf "ſeeketh to be known openly. If thou do "thoſe things, ſhew thyſelf to the world." So they have likewiſe well rendered ἐν παῤῥησίᾳ [l]; and thus it ought to have been rendered here, as the two preceding verſes plainly intimate; for the ſenſe of thoſe two verſes ſeems to be this, "that on Apollos's coming to "Epheſus, being an eloquent man, and migh-"ty in the ſcriptures, and being fervent in "Spirit, he ſpake and taught diligently, though "privately, the things of the Lord, being "ſomewhat inſtructed in the way of the Lord, "though he only knew the baptiſm of John "(not having yet had the gifts of the Spirit)." But now begins to ſpeak openly or publickly in the ſynagogue. St. Paul tells Timothy [m], that "they that uſe the office of a deacon well,

[i] Acts xviii. 24—27.
[k] John vii. 4.
[l] Coloſſ. xi. 15.
[m] 1 Tim. iii. 13.

" purchaſe to themſelves (or acquire) a good " degree and great boldneſs in the faith" (παῤῥησίαν); but this word here ſhould be rendered " great plainneſs," or the ſkill of ſpeaking plainly. Παῤῥησία is thus to be underſtood 2 Cor. iii. 12. A deacon was to be one that held the myſtery of faith [n]; and the ſenſe of this place is " that he that uſed the office of " a deacon well would acquire great plain- " neſs in teaching the myſtery." This boldneſs therefore ſeems to me to be peculiar to the apoſtles. Their firmneſs and ſteadineſs under frequent ſufferings is what diſtinguiſhes their characters through St. Luke's hiſtory of their Acts. Particularly we find, that they continued at Jeruſalem on the firſt perſecution, when all the other diſciples fled [o]. St. Paul's unſhaken reſolution ſhines through that hiſtory above the reſt; and is what he himſelf glories in, in his epiſtles. And that degree of it which he, as well as the reſt of the apoſtles had, ſeems to me to have been altogether peculiar to their office.

Such a ſuperiour degree of boldneſs, every one muſt preſently ſee that the apoſtles, who were the chief miniſters of the chriſtian church, muſt certainly have ſtood in great need of; who, as St. Paul ſays of them, " God " ſet forth as it were appointed to death; and " made a ſpectacle to the world, and to an-

[n] 1 Tim. iii. 9. [o] Acts xiii. 1.

" gels,

" gels, and men, accounted as the filth of the " world, and the off-ſcouring of all things [p];" ſo that it would have been ſurprizing, if they had not had it. And that they had ſo great a degree of it beyond others, perhaps, might not be owing ſo much to any immediate influence, as to a natural effect of other gifts, of the Spirit; particularly ſuch as the fuller revelation they had of the chriſtian religion in its extent and latitude, beyond all others; the underſtanding the darker places of the Old Teſtament (which furniſhed freſh proofs of it, and removed objections againſt it); and the revelation of future myſteries (by which they were moſt fully aſſured of its ſucceſs and duration); all of which in themſelves, as well as the inſtantaneous manner in which this knowledge was communicated to them, and the power they had of imparting the Holy Ghoſt to others (of which I ſhall ſpeak preſently), muſt fully convince them, that this was from God; and that nothing could withſtand it. And as courage and boldneſs were neceſſary to make them teſtify the facts, publiſh the doctrines, and foretell the greater events of chriſtianity before thoſe in the higheſt ſtations, and in the greateſt danger; ſo was a high degree of patience neceſſary, to enable them to bear thoſe ſufferings in a worthy and becoming manner whenever they

[p] 1 Cor. iv. 9—13.

befell

befell them. They were not only to venture danger, but to "endure hardſhips as good "ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt;" and accordingly they are repreſented as furniſhed with a peculiar degree of patience. Paul ſays, "they "approved themſelves as the miniſters of "God, with much patience in (or under) "afflictions, neceſſities, diſtreſſes, ſtripes, im-"priſonments, tumults, labours, watching, "and faſting[q]:" and reckons patience one of the ſigns or diſtinguiſhing marks of an apoſtle, as well as "ſigns and wonders and migh-"ty deeds[r]."

Thus far I have deſcribed an apoſtle, from his work and principal buſineſs, and from the qualifications he was to have, to enable him to go through it; and to deliver his teſtimony, teach the doctrine, and diſcover the myſteries of the chriſtian religion. But they had likewiſe great and peculiar powers conferred on them, to enable them to prove the truth of their teſtimony, their doctrine, and their fore-knowledge of the greater events of chriſtianity, to the world. Our Saviour told his apoſtles juſt before he was going to leave them that "when the Comforter (or the Advocate, "as παράκλητος ſignifies) ſhould come unto "them, he ſhould teſtify of him[s], and enable "them to teſtify of him[t];" and that he (in them)

[q] 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5.
[r] Ibid. xii. 12.
[s] John xv. 26.
[t] Ver. 27.

them) ſhould be ſo powerful an advocate for Jeſus as to convince the world of his righteouſneſs (or innocence); of their ſin (in putting him to death); and of the condemnation of the devil, or the working of the devil in his judgements againſt the obſtinate wickedneſs and infidelity of the Jews, and the overcoming the idolatrous and vicious opinions of the Gentiles. I have treated of the Spirit as a witneſs to the truth of chriſtianity fully in the Firſt Eſſay. I am now only to apply it to the apoſtles in particular. The great and particular powers, which enabled them to prove the truth of their teſtimony, doctrine, and predictions, were, 1. The "power of ſtriking bold "and daring offenders ſick and dead." Thus Peter ſtrikes Ananias and Saphira dead, on "their "diſſembling, and lying to the Holy Ghoſt[u]." And though we do not read of this power being carried ſo far by any of the apoſtles, in any other caſe; becauſe no caſe that we have any account of ſeems equally to have required it; yet they had the power of inflicting diſeaſes on great offenders, in other inſtances. Thus Paul ſtrikes Elymas the ſorcerer blind, when he "would have per-"verted the Roman deputy from the right "ways of the Lord[w]." He ſeems alſo to have had a power of inflicting bodily diſtem-

[u] Acts v. 1—11. [w] Ibid. xiii. 11.

pers

pers on chriſtians, who had been guilty of great and notorious ſins. This he calls his "power, authority, and rod," (ῥάβδον alluding not to Moſes's rod, but to the ῥάβδον δυνάμεως of Chriſt, which David had ſpoken of [x], and by which he had prophetically deſcribed the gifts of the Spirit); "committed to him for "edification, and not for deſtruction [y]; by "which he was ready to avenge all diſobedi-"ence [z];" and by which he could bring more terrible judgements on offenders than Moſes brought by his rod on the Egyptians. Though it is likely, that ſometimes he did not inflict this ſentence immediately himſelf, but delivered them over "to Satan, for the puniſh-"ment of the fleſh; that the Spirit might "be ſaved in the day of the Lord;" as he did in the caſe of the inceſtuous Corinthian [a]; and as he likewiſe did in the caſe of "Hyme-"næus and Alexander, whom he delivered to "Satan, that they might learn not to blaſ-"pheme [b]." And it is very likely, that it was for a ſickneſs of this ſort, inflicted by ſome of the apoſtles, that St. James directs thoſe that laboured under it, to ſend for the elders of the church to pray over them, and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord; ſince he ſays, "the prayer of faith," or the

[x] Pſalm x. 2.
[y] 1 Cor. iv. 21. 2 Cor. x. 8. xiii. 10. [z] 2 Cor. x. 6.
[a] 1 Cor. v. 5. [b] 1 Tim. i. 20.

inwrought prayer of the righteous or inſpired man "ſhould ſave the ſick;" and if "they "had committed ſins," that is, for which this ſickneſs was inflicted "they ſhould be "forgiven them," that is, they ſhould be healed[c]. Peter's ſtriking Ananias and Saphira dead (the firſt and higheſt inſtance of this power) was made an objection to the chriſtian religion long ago, by one of its greateſt enemies. But though the apoſtolical power was not carried ſo far in any other inſtance; yet this ſeverity ſeemed very neceſſary againſt the firſt lye that was made to tempt the Holy Ghoſt, in the beginning of his diſpenſation or oeconomy; in order to vindicate the honour of the Spirit, and to juſtify the chief miniſters of it, who by this ſingular inſtance of the power of one of them, convinced all by-ſtanders, that they made no pretenſions to the Spirit, which the Spirit would not enable them to ſupport. Which thus alſo at the ſame time eminently appeared in them the "Spirit of truth," by detecting and puniſhing the lye of thoſe pretended believers, whoſe hearts "were filled with the Spirit of "falſhood[d]."

2. And though healing the ſick was one of the loweſt of the gifts of the Spirit, and commited, no doubt, to many chriſtians, who had, perhaps, no other miniſtry in the church;

[c] James v. 14—17. [d] Acts v. 3.

yet

yet the power of working great and "extra-"ordinary cures," or working the cure of common diſtempers, "in a great and extra-"ordinary manner," ſeems reſerved to the apoſtles. Thus it is obſerved by St. Luke, as a matter that deſerved to be recorded, of Peter and John, that "they cured one that "had been a cripple from his mother's womb, "who lay at the beautiful gate of the Tem-"ple[e];" that "Peter's ſhadow cured many[f];" "that he raiſed Dorcas from the dead[g];" that Paul, at Lyſtra, cured the "cripple that "had never walked[h];" that he "ſent hand-"kerchiefs from his body, to perform cures "at a diſtance[i];" and raiſed Eutychus immediately "after he had fallen from a loft, "three ſtories high[k]." And it is, perhaps, in this ſenſe, that the cures performed by handkerchiefs from Paul's body are mentioned as an inſtance of the "ſpecial miracles" that God wrought by the hands of Paul[l]; that is, ſuch miracles or cures, as God did not work but by the hands of his apoſtles, the chief miniſters in the kingdom of Chriſt. And there is no doubt to be made, but that as the apoſtles delivered over to Satan, ſo they could deliver from him thoſe they had deli-

[e] Acts ix. 1—12.
[f] Ibid. v. 15.
[g] Ibid. ix. 36—42.
[h] Ibid. xiv. 8—11.
[i] Ibid. xix. 12.
[k] Ibid. xx. 12.
[l] Ibid. xix. 11.

vered to him, leſt "ſuch ſhould have been "ſwallowed up of overmuch ſorrow[m]; and "leſt Satan ſhould have got an advantage "over them." They who could diſpoſſeſs the poſſeſſed, could no doubt releaſe thoſe whom they had put into his power, when they ſaw the fleſh deſtroyed, and the end of their puniſhment obtained.

3. But the greateſt of theſe powers, and conſequently the greateſt proof of the truth of their teſtimony, teaching, and prophecy, was the "power of conferring the Holy "Ghoſt on believers." And as our Saviour might juſtly ſay to the apoſtles, that "as the "Father ſent him, ſo did he ſend them," in reſpect of their teſtimony, their teaching, their predictions, their courage, and the miraculous powers they had; ſo alſo might he ſay it with the greateſt propriety in reſpect of the power of conferring the Holy Ghoſt on others; which he himſelf had conferred on them. And by being able to confer the Holy Ghoſt, as well as by the peculiar illumination which they themſelves received, they became "miniſters of the Spirit, which giveth "life[n]." The Holy Ghoſt himſelf deſcended on the one hundred and twenty, firſt[o]; and afterwards, on them, a ſecond time[p]: they being, in all probability, the perſons

[m] 2 Cor. xi. 7.
[n] Ibid. iii. 6.
[o] Acts ii. 4.
[p] Ibid. iv. 31.

deſcribed

deſcribed in this laſt mentioned place by "the "apoſtles company." After that, he deſcended on Saul to qualify him the better for a teacher, prophet, and an apoſtle; on Cornelius his family and friends (the firſt-fruits of the devout Gentiles); and on the firſt great converſion of the idolatrous Gentiles, at Antioch in Piſidia; to ſatisfy the Jews, that Peter had done nothing in one caſe, nor Paul in the other, but by God's immediate order and direction. But theſe do not ſeem to have been conferred in any other inſtance, but only by the laying on of the hands of the apoſtles [p].

This power which the apoſtles had, of conferring theſe gifts, is what I am apt to think our Saviour referred to, when he ordered them, juſt before his aſcenſion, "to "tarry in the city of Jeruſalem, until they "were endued with power, δυνάμει, from on "high [q]." I cannot but obſerve by the bye, that this is the word uſed Pſalm cx. 2: we tranſlate it in the new verſion "the rod of his ſtrength;" but it was better rendered in the old "the rod "of his power," ῥάβδον δυνάμεως; and ver. 3. "the people ſhall be willing in the day of "thy power." And I apprehend that one reaſon why our Saviour uſes this word here is, that it is the word in which David had prophetically foretold the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt

[p] See the Firſt Eſſay. [q] Luke xxiv. 49.

in that Pſalm[r]. In the firſt verſe he ſpeaks of Chriſt's exaltation "until his enemies "become his footſtool;" in the ſecond, that on his exaltation to the right hand of God, God ſhould ſend the "rod of his (Chriſt's) power "(ῥάβδον δυνάμεως) out of Zion;" that "rod of "power" by which he ſhould "rule in the "midſt of his enemies," as we ſee Chriſt did by the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt the very day they were ſent down on the apoſtles and firſt diſciples, aſſembled by Chriſt's direction at Jeruſalem waiting for them. For by them Chriſt's apoſtles ſubdued many of thoſe who had crucified him, being now convinced by them that he was exalted to the right hand of God, and was become Lord and Chriſt[s]. By this, of enemies they became a willing and a numerous people in the day of his power. For "they gladly received his word[t]," and ſold their poſſeſſions, giving to their fellow ſubjects as every man had need[u]. And St. Luke farther acquaints us[w], that our Saviour told them, that "they ſhould receive power, "after that the Holy Ghoſt was come upon "them; and that they ſhould be witneſſes "unto him, &c." ſo that the power (δύναμις) here ſeems to be ſomewhat diſtinct from the

[r] Another reaſon why our Saviour uſes this word may be ſeen in the Firſt Eſſay.

[s] Acts xi. 34—37.
[t] Ibid. 41, 46, 47.
[u] Ver. 44, 45.
[w] Ibid. i. 8.

gifts

gifts themſelves. What ſhould that be, but the power of conferring them? ſuitably whereunto St. Luke acquaints us, that Simon Magus, on ſeeing, that, "through laying on of the apoſtles hands, the Holy Ghoſt was given, offered them money, ſaying, Give me alſo this power or authority (τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην) that on whomſoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Ghoſt[x]." Agreeably hereunto St. Paul alſo ſpeaks of what he did, in the "power of the Spirit of God, from Jeruſalem to Illyricum, among the Gentiles (ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος Θεοῦ[y])." So that the power the apoſtles were to wait for, before they were to begin to witneſs, ſeems to me to have been the power of conferring theſe gifts.

And as I apprehend the power of conferring the Holy Ghoſt was the power the apoſtles were to wait for, before they began to teſtify; ſo I apprehend it was the peculiar and diſtinguiſhing power, that belonged to them, as witneſſes, as well as teachers, and prophets of the firſt rank. The reaſons that make this appear to have been the moſt peculiar and diſtinguiſhing power belonging to their office, may be ſeen in the Firſt Eſſay, and in the progreſs of this. And that in fact it was ſo, we farther ſee in the caſe of Philip's preaching to the Samaritans. For though on his preach-

[x] Acts viii. 19. [y] Rom. xv. 19.

ing, and their believing, he baptized them; yet he could not confer the Holy Ghoſt. "For as yet," as St. Luke obſerves, "he "was fallen upon none of them [a]," But when the apoſtles at Jeruſalem, on hearing of Philip's ſucceſs, had ſent down Peter and John, and they had "prayed for them, and "laid their hands on them, the Samaritans re-"ceived the Holy Ghoſt [a]." And when Si-"mon Magus ſaw, that through the laying "on of the hands of the apoſtles, the Holy "Ghoſt was given, he offered them money, "ſaying, Give me alſo this power, that on "whomſoever I lay my hands, he may receive "Holy Ghoſt [b]." So that Simon Magus thought the apoſtles only had the power of confering the Holy Ghoſt; or elſe he would not, probably, have offered the money to them, but to Philip; by whom he believed, and with whom he had been acquainted for ſome time. And that Philip could not confer the Holy Ghoſt, but the apoſtles only, is the obſervation of Chryſoſtom in loc. And Epiphanius ſays, ὁ Φίλιππος, διάκονος ὢν, οὐκ ἔσχεν ἐξουσίαν τῆς χειροθεσίας τὸ δὶ αὐτῆς δοῦναι πνεῦμα ἅγιον [f].

St. Paul "confers the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt "on Timothy," as St. Paul himſelf aſſerts [e];

[a] Acts viii. 16.
[b] Ver. 18, 19.
[c] 2 Tim. i. 6.
[d] Ver. 15, 17.
[f] Hæreſ. 21. Simon.

and

and it is plain, he imparted them to the Theſſalonians. For being juſt about to ſpeak of his firſt entrance and reception among them[h], he ſays[i], "For our goſpel came not "unto you in word only, but alſo in power, "and in the Holy Ghoſt." And ſo likewiſe tells the Corinthians, that his preaching when he firſt "came to them, was not with entic- "ing words of man's wiſdom, but in demon- "ſtration of the Spirit, and of power; that "their faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdom "of man, but in the power of God[k]." And he ſufficiently intimates, that he had imparted the Spirit to the Galatians, at his firſt coming among them, and their "receiving him as an "angel of God, even as Chriſt Jeſus,[l]" When he aſks them[m], "Are ye ſo fooliſh, "having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made "perfect by the fleſh? he therefore that mi- "niſtreth to you the Spirit,—doth he it by "the works of the law, or the hearing of "faith?" St. Luke informs us, that when Paul came to Epheſus, finding twelve of John's diſciples, he imparted the Holy Ghoſt to them. And the manner in which St. Luke introduces the relation ſhews, that Paul imparted it to all believers of courſe, where he came[n]. And ſo he ſpeaks of this matter him-

[h] 1 Theſſ. i. 6. ii. 1.
[i] Ibid. i. 5.
[k] 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.
[l] Gal. iv. 14.
[m] Ibid. iii. 3—5.
[n] Acts xix. 8. See the Firſt Eſſay.

ſelf

ſelf to the Romans; for he ſays, that he writes to them more boldly—becauſe "of the "grace given him of God, that the offering up "of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being "ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt. I have there-"fore (ſays he) whereof I may glory, through "Jeſus Chriſt, in thoſe things which pertain "unto God: for I will not dare to ſpeak of "any of thoſe things, which Chriſt hath not "wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obe-"dient in word and deed, through mighty "ſigns and wonders, by the power of the "Spirit of God; ſo that from Jeruſalem, "round about unto Illyricum, I have fully "preached the goſpel of Chriſt[o]."

And as where-ever Paul had been, he ſeems to have conferred the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt; ſo he appears deſirous to ſee ſome churches which he had not yet ſeen, that he might confer them; particularly that at "Rome, "that he might impart unto them ſome ſpi-"ritual gift, to the end they might be eſta-"bliſhed. That is, (ſays he) that I may be "comforted together with you, by the mu-"tual faith both of you and me[p]."

Theſe powers, and eſpecially the laſt, ſeem to me to be "thoſe ſigns of an apoſtle," to which St. Paul appeals, in his ſecond epiſtle to the Corinthians[q]. A church that "abound-

[o] Rom. xv. 16—20. [p] Ibid. i. 11, 12.
[q] 2 Cor. xii. 12.

"ed

"ed in all the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt[r]," ſo as "to be inferior to no church, or to come "behind no church in them[s];" and by this power he proves, that he came behind none of the apoſtles, ſince that "truly the ſigns of "an apoſtle were wrought among them— "in all ſigns and wonders, and mighty "deeds[t]." And this is what he points at, as the ſeal of his apoſtleſhip among them, when he ſays[u], "if I am not an apoſtle to others, "yet doubtleſs I am to you; for the ſeal of "my apoſtleſhip are ye in the Lord;" that is, in my conferring, and your receiving the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, you have received the mark or proof of my apoſtleſhip to you; the moſt peculiar and diſtinguiſhing, and the leaſt liable to any ſuſpicion of being counterfeited, of any other whatſoever. The Corinthians, indeed, abounded in ſpiritual gifts, which he had imparted, and that, therefore, muſt be the ſeal of his apoſtleſhip. For they were ſo far from excelling other churches in holineſs and virtue, that they ſeem, by both St. Paul's epiſtles to them, to have had more faults, diſorders, and vices among them, than any of the reſt; ſuch as had kept him a great while from coming among them, leſt he ſhould have been forced to have uſed too great ſharpneſs and ſeverity, inſtead of the gentle-

[r] 2 Cor. xii. 13.
[s] 1 Cor. i. 7.
[t] 2 Cor. xii. 12.
[u] 1 Cor. ix. 2.

neſs

neſs and meekneſs that he deſired to expreſs toward them. I muſt refer my reader to the Firſt Eſſay, where he will find ſeveral things ſaid, which may ſerve to prove what I am aſſerting here; though I alledged them there, to prove that all believers, where the apoſtles came, had theſe gifts imparted to them. But moſt of thoſe texts will ſhew, that it was ſome of the apoſtles who imparted them. And though we do not read of any of the apoſtles conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt beſides Peter, John, and Paul; yet there is no room to doubt, but all the reſt exerciſed that power as well as they.

From theſe conſiderations, I think, it appears very plainly, that the conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, by the laying on of hands, was peculiar to the apoſtles, and the moſt diſtinguiſhing badge of their office. But there ſeem to be two objections againſt it, which deſerve our attention. The firſt is, that "Saul has been generally thought to "have been filled with the Holy Ghoſt, by "the laying on of the hands of Ananias;" becauſe Ananias ſays, that Chriſt ſent him, that "Saul might receive his ſight, and be "filled with the Holy Ghoſt[w]." Yet this, in my opinion, is very far from making it clear, that Ananias conferred the Holy Ghoſt on Saul, if we conſider the whole matter. For

[w] Acts ix. 17.

the

the orders which Ananias receives in a viſion, and that he is acquainted Saul had had notice of in a viſion alſo, were, that he (Ananias) was to come to him (Saul) "to "put his hands on him, that he might re- "ceive his ſight[x]." If Ananias was to come to him, that by putting his hands on him, he might receive the Holy Ghoſt, it is ſurprizing, that ſo ſuperior a gift to that of the imparting ſight, ſhould not have been mentioned. And when St. Luke introduces Paul himſelf as giving an account of this tranſaction[y]; he ſpeaks only of receiving his ſight from Ananias: and one Ananias, (ſays he,) came unto "me, and ſtood, and ſaid unto me, Brother "Saul, receive thy ſight;" but ſays nothing of his receiving the Holy Ghoſt from him.

And that he did not receive the Holy Ghoſt at leaſt by that laying on of the hands of Ananias that reſtored Saul's ſight, is plain from hence; that after Saul had received his ſight, by the laying on of Ananias's hands, "he "aroſe, and was baptized[z]." And in the account that Paul himſelf is introduced, as giving of this tranſaction[a]; he ſays, that after Ananias had ſaid to him, "Brother Saul, re- "ceive thy ſight, and that he looked up upon "him," and that Ananias had delivered him a farther meſſage, "he was baptized." All

[x] Acts ix. 11, 12.
[y] Ibid. xxii. 12, 13.
[z] Ver. 18.
[a] Acts xxii. 13—17.

this ſhews, that he was not baptized, until after he had received his ſight, by Ananias's laying on his hands. Now the Holy Ghoſt fell always after baptiſm, unleſs in the caſe of Cornelius and his family, for a reaſon that did not hold in the caſe of Saul; ſee the Firſt Eſſay. From hence then we may conclude, that Ananias did not confer the Holy Ghoſt on Saul, by that laying on of his hands, by which he gave Saul his ſight. And as we have no account that he laid his hands on him a ſecond time, it is plain, that the text does not aſſert that Ananias gave Saul the Holy Ghoſt.

Perhaps, therefore, all that Ananias did, was to put his hands on him, in order to give him ſight; that ſo, when he received it, and had been baptized, he might ſee the Holy Ghoſt deſcend on him in a cloven tongue, as of fire; as it did on the other apoſtles and their company, at the beginning: eſpecially ſince Paul aſſerts, that "he was not one whit be-"hind the very chiefeſt apoſtles[b];" and that in other caſes, what happened to them in the courſe of things, happened to him alſo, though "out of courſe;" as to one "born "out of due time." For as they ſaw the Lord, ſo did he; and it is very probable, therefore, that as the Holy Ghoſt deſcended on them, ſo it did on him alſo. And, I think

[b] 2 Cor. xi. 5.

this

this is plainly implied, in its being ſaid, that "he was to be filled with the Holy Ghoſt [c];" and in its being afterwards ſaid, that he "was "full of the Holy Ghoſt [d]."

Nay, as I apprehend, he refers "to the "immediate deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt on "himſelf," Tit. iii. 5, 6. where, ſpeaking of the Holy Ghoſt, he ſays, "which he ſhed on us "abundantly." Now that phraſe, as I have obſeved in the Firſt Eſſay, denotes the immediate deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt; or his falling down without the intervention of hands. The only queſtion here is, whether St. Paul ſpeaks of himſelf in this place; which I apprehend he does: for taking this to be the connexion and the ſenſe of it, he is directing Titus what he ſhould teach the Cretans [f]; and proceeds [g] thus: "Put them in mind— "to ſpeak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, "but gentle, ſhewing meekneſs to all men." And to ſhew how reaſonable it was for him to direct Titus to teach this doctrine of gentleneſs and meekneſs to all men, even to the worſt; where the beſt may, perhaps, think themſelves the moſt juſtified in ſhewing a fierce and bitter zeal; he adds [h], "for we "ourſelves," that is, I myſelf, "was ſome- "times fooliſh", not knowing the truth, but

[c] Acts ix. 17.
[d] Ibid. xiii. 9.
[e] Ibid. Chap. ii.
[f] Ibid. iii. 1, 2.
[h] Ver. 3.

ignorant

ignorant of the goſpel of Chriſt, even after I had opportunity of informing myſelf of it; "diſobedient" to it, after I knew it, "deceiv-"ed" in thinking ſtill that I was to be juſti-fied by the works of righteouſneſs, enjoined by the law of Moſes, "ſerving divers luſts "and pleaſures" particularly thoſe that fol-low, "living in malice and envy" againſt all the diſciples, "hateful" to them, and becauſe "hating them;" being, as he ſays[i], "a blaſ-"phemer, and a perſecutor, and injurious;" breathing out nothing but "threatenings "againſt them; making havock of them; "and entering into every houſe haled "men and women out of them, and commit-"ted them to priſon; being exceedingly mad "againſt them; perſecuting them to ſtrange "cities, and to the death; and even compel-"ling them to blaſpheme[k]; but after that "the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour "towards man appeared (to me), not by the "works of righteouſneſs (which I did as a "phariſee), but according to his mercy he "ſaved us (me) by the waſhing of regenera-"tion",—regeneration being ſignified by the waſhing of baptiſm, alluding particularly to Ananias's words, "Ariſe, and waſh away thy "ſins[l]"—"and by the renewing of the Holy

[i] 1 Tim. i. 13.
[k] Acts viii. 3. ix. 1, 2. xxii. 4. xxvi. 11.
[l] Ibid. xxii. 16.

"Ghoſt,

"Ghoſt, which" (as ſoon as I was baptized) "he ſhed on me abundantly"—a phraſe that I think always denotes the immediate communication of the Holy Ghoſt—"and filled me with his gifts:" the proof that he had renewed me, or made a new creature of me. So that the ſenſe upon the whole, is as Seneca ſays in another caſe [m]; "Faciet nos moderatiores reſpectus noſtri, ſi "conſulüerimus nos:" and not unlike what Pliny ſays, on a like occaſion with Seneca, "Cogita illum puerum eſſe, & te fuiſſe." The whole ſeems to be very near what St. Paul undoubtedly ſays of himſelf [n]: "And I "thank Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who hath "enabled me, for that he counted me faith-"ful, putting me into the miniſtry; who was "before a blaſphemer, and a perſecutor, and "injurious. But I obtained mercy becauſe I "did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace "of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with "faith and love which is in Chriſt Jeſus. This "is a faithful ſaying—that Chriſt Jeſus came "into the world to ſave ſinners, of whom I "am chief." If this be not the ſenſe of this place, I muſt own that the connexion of St. Paul's thoughts here does not appear to me; conſidering that he is writing to Titus, what he ſhould teach the Cretans.

[m] De Ira, ii. 28. [n] 1 Tim. i. 12, 13, 14, 15.

I do not apprehend, that it is any objection to this interpretation, that Paul ſays, "He "had always lived in all good conſcience[o]; for the meaning there is, that he had acted according to his full perſuaſion, ſince his ſeeing the glory of Chriſt in the road to Damaſcus; as he had not acted againſt the full and clear convictions of his conſcience, before; even while he perſecuted all of this way (though he had been wanting in a due attention to the evidence of the chriſtian religion), referring to the ſpeech he had made the day before[p], in which he had[q] ſhewed, that, inſtead of being a profligate Egyptian as the chief captain had imagined[r], or of being guilty of teaching the Jews, which were among the Gentiles, againſt the people and the law, and the temple, and polluted it, of which the Jews of Aſia accuſed him[s]; he had been not only "as touching the law blame-"leſs," but highly, nay madly zealous: and that it was on nothing but the higheſt evidence, that he at laſt became a chriſtian. Nor is this interpretation contrary to the character he gives of himſelf, Phil. iii. 6. 2 Tim. i. 3. For not to go about to explain thoſe texts now, and, to ſhew in particular, that they do not contradict this interpretation, I will obſerve only theſe two

[o] Acts xxiii. 1.
[p] Ibid. xxii.
[q] Ver. 3, 4.
[r] Ibid. xxi. 38.
[s] Ver. 27, 28.

things;

things; firſt, that all the luſts he here ſpeaks of, were ſuch as conſiſted with being thought blameleſs, according to the law: or, in other words, were ſuch as might be committed by thoſe that worſhiped one God, and outwardly appeared to live conſcientiouſly, or conformably to the law [t]. And ſecondly, that notwithſtanding the character he gives of himſelf [u] here, he ſays, in a place I juſt now quoted [w], that he was "a blaſphemer, and a "perſecutor, and injurious;" and elſewhere that he was, on this account, not only "leſs "than the leaſt of all the apoſtles, not wor-"thy to be called one, and leſs than the "leaſt of all ſaints; but the chiefeſt of ſin-"ners [x]."

And I the rather apprehend the Holy Ghoſt fell down immediately on St. Paul, as he did on the other apoſtles, for theſe reaſons; (1.) that he might thereby point him out as an apoſtle, and ſet him on a level with the other apoſtles in this reſpect; ſince he ſays, he was "not one whit behind the very chiefeſt of "them;" and in all reſpects ſeems to have the preference to them. (2). We find no trace of any objection to St. Paul, on the account of the Holy Ghoſt's being imparted to him by another, and particularly by a diſciple, as we find there was an account of his being thought

[t] 1 Cor. xv. 9.
[u] Phil. iii. 6. 2 Tim. i. 3.
[w] 2 Tim. i. 13.
[x] 1 Tim. 15.

to have received his doctrine and apoſtleſhip from the Jewiſh apoſtles; of his not being uniform in his teaching the goſpel of the Gentiles; of his rude ſpeech, and mean and contemptible appearance: and there is little doubt to be made, but we ſhould have met with this objection to him, as well as the others, if there had been any ground for ſuch an objection: ſince, if he had received the Holy Ghoſt from another, and eſpecially from Ananias a diſciple, it would have ſet him below the other apoſtles, on whom the Holy Ghoſt fell without the intervention of hands. (3.) Becauſe, if the Holy Ghoſt did not deſcend on him without the intervention of hands, the Holy Ghoſt muſt have been imparted to him by the laying on of the hands of Ananias, who was but a diſciple [y]. And we are ſo far from having any inſtance of a diſciple's conferring the Holy Ghoſt, that we find Philip, who was himſelf "full of the "Holy Ghoſt," a deacon [z], and an evangeliſt [a]; and, in all probability, an elder (or one of the hundred and twenty on whom the Holy Ghoſt firſt fell) could not impart it [b].

And as St. Paul ſeems to me to aſſert expreſſly in this text, that the Holy Ghoſt fell down on him in the ſame manner as it did on

[y] Acts ix. 10.
[z] Chap. vi.
[a] Chap. xxi. 8.
[b] Acts viii. 12——20.

the reſt of the apoſtles; ſo he ſeems to imply it in another, where he ſpeaks of himſelf, as having received the firſt fruits of the Spirit, as well as other apoſtles[c]; "for we ourſelves "(ſays he), who have received the firſt fruits "of the Spirit, groan within ourſelves, &c." Now firſt-fruits ſignifies a ſmall, but the choiceſt portion of that kind of which they were the firſt-fruits[d]. So that the meaning of the firſt-fruits of the Spirit, are the choiceſt gifts of the Spirit; which, as we have obſerved before, were given immediately by the falling down of the Holy Ghoſt, without the intervention of hands; and particularly on the apoſtles, who had the higheſt and the greateſt variety of ſpiritual gifts. And that "we" ſignifies "we apoſtles," in oppoſition to "the reſt "of the creatures," or "new creation, or the "reſt of chriſtians[e]," will appear to thoſe who conſider the context[f]. And if ſo, St. Paul here implies, that he, as well as the reſt of the apoſtles, received the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, by the Holy Ghoſt's falling down on him immediately, as on them, without the intervention of hands.

There is another objection to this aſſertion, and which may, at the ſame time, be likewiſe

[c] Rom. viii. 23.

[d] 1 Cor. xv. 20. 23. Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. i. 15, 16. James i. 18.

[e] So that expreſſion more plainly ſignifies, James i. 18.

[f] See Limborch in loc.

conſidered as an exception againſt one of the inſtances I have brought, to ſhew that the Holy Ghoſt was conferred by the laying on of the hands of the apoſtles, which is the caſe of Timothy, who has been generally thought to have received the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, "by the laying on of hands of the preſby-"tery [h];" whereas I have aſſerted he received them from Paul. But I do not ſee how Timothy's receiving thoſe gifts "by the laying "on of the hands of the preſbytery," is reconcilable with St. Paul's expreſſly ſaying it was "by the laying on of his hands;" for it is ſuppoſed by all, that this was the ſame gift mentioned by St. Paul, 2 Tim. i. 6. And that it is the ſame gift, appears not only from the very ſame word being uſed in both places, χάρισμα; but from that word's always ſignifying ſome gift; and ſignifying always, except once, a gift of God: And of the ſixteen times it is uſed in the New Teſtament, ſignifying eleven times the gift of the Holy Ghoſt [i], but never once an office. And how is it reconcilable to good ſenſe, or St. Paul's humility, for him to aſſume or arrogate that to the laying on of his hands only, which was due to the laying on of his hands but in conjunction with the laying on of the hands of ſo many others? Nor do I ſee, how this can be reconciled to the whole current of ſcripture, which aſcribes this power always

[h] 1 Tim. iv. 14. [i] See the Firſt Eſſay.

to

to the apoſtles, and never gives us a ſingle inſtance of its being given by an elder, though the next in rank to the apoſtles. Nay, if Philip was an elder, as I have juſt now ſhewn we have great reaſon to believe, it appears that an elder could not confer the Holy Ghoſt by the laying on of his hands, from the hiſtory of the converſion of the Samaritans [k]. I obſerve therefore, that the text runs thus; "neglect not the gift that is in thee, which "was given thee by prophecy" (διὰ προφητείας) (or "according to the prophecy concerning "thee," "with" (μετὰ) not "by" (διὰ) "the "laying on of the hands of the preſbytery." Laying on of hands was a ſign that accompanied bleſſing and prayer. See the Third Eſſay. I ſhall not repeat all that I ſay there to prove it. I ſhall only mention this, that "when "they laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul "after they had faſted and prayed [l]," it is ſaid to be nothing more, than "a recommending "them to the grace of God [m]." And ſo the church of Antioch recommended Paul a ſecond time to the grace of God [n]; and, as is highly probable [o], by faſting and prayer, and the laying on of hands. I take the ſenſe, therefore, of this place to be, "neglect not "the gift of an evangeliſt that was given

[k] Acts viii. 12—20. [l] Ibid. xiii. 3.
[m] Ibid. xiv. 26. [n] Ibid. xv. 40.
[o] From the ſame expreſſion being uſed as in Acts xiv. 26.

" thee, by the putting on of my hands, accor-
" ing to the prophecy of a prophet, or pro-
" phets, concerning thee, to whom it was re-
" vealed by the Spirit, that thou wouldſt be fit
" for the work which thou waſt to under-
" take; and that thou wouldeſt not neglect,
" but ſtir up the gift that ſhould be given
" thee, by the laying on of my hands: other-
" wiſe I ſhould not have ventured to have
" prayed for the gifts of an evangeliſt for thee,
" or laid my hands on thee in the hope of
" thy obtaining it, conſidering thy youth:
" but the prophecies made of thee were a ſuf-
" ficient warrant for me to pray to God and
" lay my hands on thee for this purpoſe.
" And which when I had done, the preſby-
" tery, or all the elders at Derbe or Lyſtra
" recommended thee to the grace of God,
" praying for a bleſſing on thy gifts and la-
" bours; laying their hands on thee, when
" they prayed for that bleſſing; according to
" the cuſtom uſual in ſuch caſes."

Thus, I hope, I have proved my aſſertion, " that the apoſtles, and none but apoſtles, " had the power of conferring the gifts " of the Holy Ghoſt; and that this was the " moſt diſtinguiſhing badge of their office;" and have anſwered the exceptions that may be made againſt it.

I now proceed to ſhew, that as St. Paul had theſe extraordinary powers, in common with

with the reſt of the apoſtles; ſo he ſeems to have had "one, which was peculiar to him-"ſelf;" at leaſt, that he had one, which we have no account of in any of the other apoſtles: which is, the power he ſometimes had "of ſeeing what was done in the Gentile "churches at a diſtance; and of being pre-"ſent with them when abſent;" as Eliſha, by his prophetic ſpirit, went with Gehazi, and ſaw his receiving a preſent from Naaman the Syrian [p]. We have one inſtance of this in St. Paul, in the epiſtle to the Coloſſians [q], where he tells them, that though he was "abſent in the fleſh, yet he was preſent in "Spirit, joying, and beholding their order, "and the ſtedfaſtneſs of their faith in Chriſt." And we have another inſtance in his epiſtle to the Corinthians [r], where he tells them, that "he, as abſent in body, but preſent in "Spirit, had judged already, as though he "was preſent, concerning him that had done "that deed. In the name of the Lord Jeſus "Chriſt (ſays he), when ye are gathered to-"gether, and my Spirit, with the power of "the Lord Jeſus to deliver ſuch an one to "Satan, &c." Perhaps this gift might be imparted to him, conſidering the vaſt extent of his province, and the great number of churches he had under his care, for the

[p] 2 Kings v. 26. [q] Col. ii. 5.
[r] 1 Cor. v. 3, 4.

greater

greater benefit of thoſe churches, and to relieve him from ſome of that anxiety he had for their welfare.

Now as chriſtianity is nothing (beſides the doctrine our Saviour himſelf taught) but the teſtimony and doctrine (and, if you will, the predictions) of the apoſtles; ſo theſe ſeveral powers of inflicting diſeaſes on obſtinate offenders, and of healing diſtempers, in the manner they could heal; and above all, the power of imparting the Holy Ghoſt, by the laying on of their hands (and the power of ſeeing things at a diſtance in St. Paul) were "the proofs of the truth of their teſtimony, "and of their doctrine" (and their predictions); ſo that thoſe who ſaw them exert thoſe powers could no longer doubt of the truth of what they teſtified and taught (or foretold), as I have ſhewn more fully elſewhere[s]. This was what made their teſtimony, and their doctrine (and their predictions), ſo generally received; and without which all would have been queſtioned. It was for this reaſon that our Saviour did not ſo much as expect that they ſhould go and teſtify, and teach, much leſs that they ſhould be received, until they had theſe powers imparted to them. For our Saviour orders them to "tarry at Jeruſalem, "until they were endued with power from "on high[t];" and tells them, "that they

[s] See the Firſt Eſſay. [t] Luke xxiv. 49.

"ſhould

"ſhould receive power, after that the Holy "Ghoſt ſhould be come upon them, and that "(then) they ſhould be witneſſes." Accordingly they continue at Jeruſalem together in an upper room, until the Holy Ghoſt comes down upon them, teaches them the doctrine they were to teach, and gives them the courage neceſſary to their teſtifying and teaching, and the powers neceſſary to prove the truth of their teſtimony and of their doctrine: and then they go and teſtify, and teach what they had ſeen and heard, and what they had been taught, with the greateſt reſolution and ſucceſs; and without ever fainting, or growing weary in their work. And becauſe the apoſtles were to have ſuch great and peculiar powers to prove the truth of their teſtimony, for that reaſon they alone were ordered, or commiſſioned, to witneſs or teſtify. And becauſe they were ſuch bold, ſuch unwearied, ſuch convincing witneſſes of the truth of the great facts of chriſtianity, as well as becauſe they had the only commiſſion to teſtify them, they are therefore ſpoken of every where in the New Teſtament, as the only witneſſes and teſtifiers of theſe facts to the world.

Thoſe who aſſumed the apoſtolical character, giving themſelves out for apoſtles, could not expect to be received without endeavouring to imitate and counterfeit ſome of their powers, as well as pretending to new revelations.

tions. Our Saviour foretold this before his death; ſaying, that "falſe prophets as well as "falſe Chriſts ſhould ariſe, and ſhould ſhew "great ſigns and wonders, inſomuch that if "it were poſſible they ſhould deceive the very "elect[u]." St. Paul ſpeaks of falſe apoſtles[w] in his time, as well as St. John in the latter end of his[x]; and St. Paul calls them "deceitful "workers, transforming themſelves" by their deceitful works as well as their falſe pretentions) "into the" appearance of the "apoſtles "of Chriſt." It is highly probable theſe are thoſe whom St. Paul deſcribes[y], and whom he calls "ſeducers[z]," and "as having a form or falſe appearance "of godlineſs, whilſt "they denied the power thereof[a];" and who, as I think, he intimates withſtood him, as Jannes and Jambres the two Egyptian magicians did Moſes; namely, "after the working "of Satan, with lying wonders, and all de-"ceitfulneſs"; as St. Paul on another occaſion writes to the Theſſalonians[b]; even ſuch, as "they ſhould believe though a lye and a "meer appearance; who love not the truth[c]." Such deceitful workers were Simon Magus, who bewitched the people giving out or pretending himſelf ſome great one; and who

[u] Mat. xxiv. 24.
[x] Rev. ii. 2.
[z] Ver. 3.
[b] 2 Theſſ. ii. 9.
[w] 2 Cor. xi. 24.
[y] 2 Tim. iii. 2—14.
[a] Ver. 5.
[c] Ver. x. 11.

as

as he ſeems to have been the firſt of theſe deceitful workers, thoſe in after-times ſprung from. Such was Elymas the ſorcerer. Such afterwards, if the accounts of the fathers are to be depended on, were Menander that diſciple of Simon Magus, the Baſilidians, the Carpocratians, Marcus, &c.; who ſeem, by the accounts that are given us of them, rather to have wrought ſeeming than real miracles; ſince one of the marks or ſigns which ſome of the fathers give us, to diſtinguiſh the real from their ſeeming miracles was whether the effect produced, or pretended to be produced, was permanent, or no[d]. Thus, as the apoſtles had their real and true, the falſe apoſtles had their falſe and pretended miracles (τερατα ψευδη), and in great abundance. But I can find but little pretenſions in theſe falſe apoſtles or hereticks, to counterfeit the gifts of illumination. They ſeem to have ſtruck them all as they did Simon Magus at the firſt[e]. I remember no pretence to the fainteſt reſemblance of theſe gifts of illumination but in one ſingle inſtance. Irenæus tells us, that Marcus, after he had made women partakers of the euchariſt (which he ſays he conſecrated by ſome magical verſes, and changed the colour of the wine by it) made them ſo mad, that they thought themſelves turned into propheteſſes[f]; and that Paredrus ſeemed to propheſy; and would im-

[d] Iren. l. ii. c. 57. xv. c. 6. [e] Ibid. i. 19. [f] Ibid. ii. c. 2.

part

part his enthuſiaſtick fury to women, by ſome verſes pronounced among them [s].

I cannot but deſire my reader to ſtop here a little with me, and review with himſelf what I have ſaid of the apoſtles; and from thence conſider the great importance of their office to mankind, and how well that conſideration ſuits with the laſt prayer our Saviour made, juſt before he was apprehended, and but a few hours before he was to die; and, conſequently, where we may be ſure to find what was moſt upon his heart. The greateſt part of this prayer by far is for the apoſtles alone, namely, from the 6th verſe to the 20th. And for them, "with the reſt that ſhould "believe on him through their word," from the 20th verſe to the 26th. That he begins to pray for the apoſtles in the 6th verſe, appears from the phraſe he uſes, "I have mani-"feſted thy name unto the men which thou "gaveſt me out of the world; thine they "were, and thou gaveſt them me." This phraſe, I think, denotes the apoſtles, wherever it occurs in this chapter, and particularly ver. 9, 11. and moſt evidently in the 12th. and chap. xviii. 9. But beſides the great ſhare our Saviour gives them in this his laſt prayer, let us conſider ſome paſſages of it. He ſays, ver. 4. "I have glorified thee on the earth; "I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt

[s] Iren. l. i. c. 12.

"me

"me to do." How does the following part of our Saviour's prayer explain this, that he had finiſhed the work which God gave him to do? Why, ver. 6, 7, 8. he adds. "I have "manifeſted thy name unto the men which "thou gaveſt me out of the world; and they "have kept thy word. They have known, "that all things whatſoever thou haſt given "me, are of thee. For I have given unto "them the words which thou gaveſt unto me, "and they have received them, and have "known ſurely that I came out from thee, "and they have believed that thou didſt ſend "me." The 12th verſe is ſtill more expreſs to our purpoſe; for there our Saviour adds, "while I was with them in the world, I kept "them in thy name: thoſe that thou gaveſt "me, I have kept, and none of them is loſt, "but the ſon of perdition." And ver. 18. "As thou haſt ſent me into the world, even "ſo have I alſo ſent them into the world." So that our Saviour ſeems to me, in the parts of this prayer which are contained in the 6th, 7th, 8th, 12th, and 18th verſes, to explain the meaning of his "finiſhing the work that God "had given him to do," in the 4th verſe, to be "that he had trained and prepared his "apoſtles for their high and important truſt:" which if they diſcharged as they ought, they would anſwer effectually all the ends for which he came into the world; and bring thoſe,

thoſe, "by the glory of which he had given "them, the ſame glory which the Father had "given him," ver. 22. (that is, the power of the Holy Ghoſt [h]) "to believe on him "through their word," who had not believed in his own. And as we may gather from theſe parts of our Saviour's prayer laid together, that the training up his apoſtles was the work, or the main work, that God had given him to do (it was all, except the few other diſciples he made); ſo he expreſſly ſays, ver. 19. that it is for their ſakes that he dies: "And for their ſakes I ſanctify myſelf, "that they alſo may be ſanctified through "me." As if he had ſaid, "As the main bu-"ſineſs of my life has been to inſtruct and "train up theſe my apoſtles, and prepare them "for the miſſion I ſhall ſoon give them; ſo "it is a principal deſign of giving myſelf up "as a ſacrifice, that I may enable them by "my death, and what will follow it, my re-"ſurrection, aſcenſion, and the ſending of the "Holy Ghoſt, to preach with ſucceſs, and "ſpread my kingdom in the world." For as "the Father ſent him, ſo ſent he them [i]," and as the Father "had appointed him the "kingdom, ſo did he appoint the kingdom to "them [k]." And as ſoon as he was to be ſet

[h] John i. 14. [i] Ibid. xx. 21.
[k] Luke xxii. 29.

on

on, or raiſed to, "the throne of his glory," they were "to ſit on twelve thrones, judging "the twelve tribes of Iſrael[1]." What words can well raiſe our idea of the office of the apoſtles higher, than that Jeſus lived and died to prepare them for the due diſcharge of that truſt?

And as I think all the foregoing conſiderations of the apoſtolick office lead us naturally to reflect on the importance of that office; ſo they will enable us to give the fulleſt anſwer to a queſtion, that Celſus put to the chriſtians; and which, at firſt ſight, ſeems as puzzling as any queſtion that was ever put to them: namely, why Jeſus appeared only to a few, after his reſurrection, and thoſe his friends; but did not ſhew himſelf to the perſons who had inſulted and crucified him; to Pilate who had condemned him; and to the Jewiſh nation, who diſbelieved him? But this conſideration lets us ſee, that his ſhewing himſelf to his diſciples only, and making his apoſtles the only witneſſes (among his diſciples) of it to the world, who were thus vouched in their teſtimony, by the gifts of the Spirit; was a ſtronger evidence to the truth of the reſurrection of Chriſt, and the other facts which related to him, and liable to leſs cavil and exception, than his appearing publickly after his reſurrection to his enemies,

[1] Matt. xix. 28.

and to the Jewiſh nation, could have been. For could his appearing to them have proved, that he had been actually dead, though now alive, ſo ſtrongly as theſe twelve witneſſes ſaying, that they ſaw him, and heard him, eat and drank, and converſed with him forty days after his reſurrection from the dead, according to his own prediction? who (beſides having all the characters of competent and faithful witneſſes) could prove the truth of what they teſtified (and convince mankind, that their Maſter had told them nothing but what was true) by the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt; which they, having received from him after his aſcenſion, excerciſed, and imparted to believers. Beſides, that the wiſdom of this method of atteſting and proving the truth of theſe facts, is farther conſpicuous in this, that the witneſſes of theſe facts were the teachers of the doctrines of Chriſt; and that thereby the ſame evidence confirmed both the facts and the doctrines of his religion; and they mutually corroborated one another. So that, without mentioning other conſiderations, and particularly the peculiar fitneſs of this method to tranſmit the facts and doctrines of chriſtianity to future ages, it was for very wiſe reaſons, that (as St. Peter ſays) "God ſhewed Chriſt openly, after he had "raiſed him from the dead, not unto all the "people, but unto witneſſes choſen before of "God,

"God, even to us (apoſtles), who did eat and "drink with him, after he aroſe from the "dead. And he commanded them to preach "unto the people, and to teſtify that he was "he which was ordained of God to be the "Judge of the quick and of the dead[m];" which was what our Saviour himſelf foretold[n], when he tells his apoſtles, "yet a little while, and "the world ſeeth me no more: but ye ſee "me."

I do not pretend to give this as the only anſwer that can be given to the objection of Celſus. What we have full and unqueſtionable teſtimony for, we muſt receive; though we have not the conviction of our ſenſes to confirm it; or could not account why that conviction was not afforded us. But I mention this anſwer, only as a corollary that reſults from what I have ſaid, of the great powers of the apoſtles: and I do not offer at other anſwers, becauſe it would divert me from my deſign.

It is for that reaſon, and two others, that I have not mentioned the integrity of the apoſtles, as witneſſes; though their integrity appears ſo fully, in the manifeſt diſintereſtedneſs and holineſs of their lives. One of the other reaſons is, that this integrity is not peculiar to the apoſtles, but common with them to all the firſt chriſtians. The other

[m] Acts x. 40—43. [n] John xiv. 19.

of thoſe reaſons is, that I have nothing to add to what has been ſo fully ſaid on theſe heads by others; and very lately, by a very ingenious writer, who has managed this part of the argument with great ſtrength, in his Third Letter to the Deiſts. Theſe conſiderations, and theſe only, have made me omit this their character, as witneſſes: and not either overlooking or under-valuing it. For I am very ſenſible how much ſtrength is added to the evidence of the truth of the doctrine, but eſpecially of the teſtimony of the apoſtles, by their being foretold by him that ſent them, that they ſhould get nothing by either, but a bare maintenance; and that they muſt ſuffer great fatigue, reproach, impriſonment, ſcourging, and death, in publiſhing the facts and doctrines of chriſtianity to the world: and by that eminent ſelf-denial, piety, and virtue, that ſhone in their conduct, altogether anſwerable to the character of men who were fully perſuaded of the truth of this prediction, and were ready to ſubmit to every part of the charge of their maſter; thoſe of ſelf-denial and patience under ſuffering not excepted.

I cannot have a more proper place than this, where I am treating of the powers of the apoſtles, to take notice of a peculiar honour and preeminence, which thoſe who were, or were to be, apoſtles, ſeem to have had above

chriſtians

chriſtians of any other rank in the church: namely, "of ſeeing the Lord," and having "immediate revelations from him, after his "aſſenſion." Thus, at the viſion of the ſheet, the Lord ſaid to Peter, "Ariſe, Peter, kill and "eat[o]:" and then diſcovered to him, that he ſhould go and preach the goſpel to the proſelytes of the gate. So likewiſe the glory of the Lord appeared to Saul, in the road to Damaſcus, and a voice ſaid, "Saul, Saul, why "perſecuteſt thou me?" And on Saul's ſaying, "Who art thou, Lord? and what wilt thou "have me to do?" The Lord ſays, "Go into "the city, and it ſhall be told thee what thou "ſhalt do[p]." So likewiſe the ſecond time he was at Jeruſalem, after his converſion, the Lord ſtood by him, "ordering him to depart "from Jeruſalem, where they would not re-"ceive his teſtimony, and go far thence to "the Gentiles[q]." And when Paul was in the caſtle of Jeruſalem, the Lord appeared to him, ſaying, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as "thou haſt teſtified in Jeruſalem, ſo muſt "thou bear witneſs alſo of me at Rome;" in order to direct him to appeal to Cæſar; that ſo by that means he might have a fit opportunity to preach the goſpel at the metropolis of the world[r]. Whereas, when God ſaw fit to ſend Philip orders to meet the eunuch, the

[o] Acts x. 13, 14.
[p] Ibid. ix. 3. 8.
[q] Ibid. xxii. 17—22.
[r] Ibid. xxiii. 11.

orders were delivered him by an angel [s], And ſo likewiſe when Peter had a viſion of the Lord to go to Cornelius, Cornelius had only a viſion of an angel to ſend for Peter [t].

With ſuch propriety and diſtinction are things managed in the oeconomy or kingdom of Chriſt; and that not only with regard to the meſſengers, but to the meſſage on which they are ſent. When that is of great importance, and draws great conſequences after it, the Lord himſelf vouchſafes to give the meſſage; and ſends the apoſtles on the errands: as when they are ordered to go, and open the kingdom of heaven to the devout or idolatrous Gentiles; or to go to the ſeat of the empire of the world. But at other times, and on occaſions of leſs importance, an angel is ſent to them alſo; as to Peter [u], and to Paul [x]. And yet, on the other hand, when it was neceſſary in a like caſe, the Lord appears to Ananias, a diſciple [y]; for Saul was to know, that it was the Lord, even Jeſus, whoſe glory had appeared to him in the way, and had told him, that he ſhould receive farther orders at Damaſcus; from whom he now received thoſe orders by the mouth of Ananias. Wherefore the Lord in this caſe, out of the road of his common diſpenſations, appears to Ananias, and ſends him to Saul, with particu-

[s] Acts viii. 26. [t] Ibid. x. 3—8. [u] Ibid. xiii. 7.
[x] Ibid. xxvii. 23. [y] Ibid. ix. 10.

lar

lar inſtructions what to ſay, and to do in relation to him: whereby Saul, who was to be the great apoſtle of the Gentiles, could not but be fully certified, that it was Jeſus who had appeared to him in the way, and had ordered him to go to Damaſcus; ſince a man at Damaſcus, named Ananias, unknown to him, could come and tell him from the Lord, that the Lord had appeared to him (though that was unknown to any but Saul, even to his companions [z]), and ſince, purſuant to what the Lord had ſaid to him, of the farther orders he ſhould receive at Damaſcus, he was ſent by the Lord to bring thoſe orders to him; and ſince, to aſſure him farther of the truth of all this, Saul had in a viſion ſeen Ananias coming to him, and reſtoring to him his ſight.

Thus far we have conſidered the apoſtles in common. But it may not be improper, on this occaſion, to conſider them as ranked under the apoſtleſhip of the Jews, and of the Gentiles. Their provinces ſeem to me to have been diſtinct: and the eleven choſen by our Saviour, with Matthias, making twelve, ſeem to have been the apoſtles of the circumciſion; and Paul and Barnabas the apoſtles of the Gentiles. That theſe twelve were the

[z] Acts ix. 7. xxii. 9. The ſenſe of the laſt place, in my apprehenſion, being that "Paul's companions heard, "that is, underſtood not the voice, or the language in "which the voice ſpake."

apoſtles of the Jews, and that the other two were chiefly the apoſtles of the Gentiles, has been pretty generally allowed. But I am apt to think, that the twelve were the apoſtles of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles; and that the other two were the apoſtles of the Gentiles only, and not of the Jews.

In all the accounts we have of the twelve, they preach to the Jews, and to the Jews only; that is, to Jews either by birth and nation (who were either Hebrew Jews of Jeruſalem, Hebrew Jews of Judæa, of Galilee, or ſprung from them, or Jews of Samaria) or by religion; that is, the proſelytes of righteouſneſs; and are ſome of thoſe that are mentioned among the "devout men dwelling at "Jeruſalem, out of every nation[z];" and who, generally, where they are mentioned in ſcripture, happened to be Helleniſt Jews, or Jews that ſpoke Greek as their mother tongue; and to them, and them alone, they write. Thus St. James writes to the twelve tribes[a]. That St. John writes his epiſtle to the Jews, appears from his writing ſo much of love and charity, againſt the zealots for the law; from his oppoſing thoſe hereticks who had ſprung up from among the Jewiſh chriſtians; and particularly from his firſt epiſtle[b], where he ſays, "Jeſus is the propitiation for our ſins; "and not for ours only, but for the ſins of "the whole world." I think it is the more

[z] Acts ii. 10. [a] James i. 1. [b] 1 John ii. 2.

probable it was written to the Jews, from his calling Chriſt "the Word[c];" a ſtyle much more likely to be uſed by him to the Jews, than to the Gentiles. It is indeed difficult to determine to whom his ſecond epiſtle is written, but ſhe might be a Jeweſs for aught appears. His third epiſtle indeed ſeems to be addreſſed to a Gentile, Gaius being a Gentile name. But theſe two laſt are only epiſtles written to two particular perſons; which therefore puts them out of the preſent conſideration. Though I confeſs if Jude's be a genuine epiſtle (which cannot be doubted when the evidence for its genuineneſs is fairly weighed), it ſeems to be written to Gentiles, an ancient copy having τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐν Θεῷ[d]; and it being directed to them as "the Called[f], which, if I miſtake not, is uſed generally, if not only, of the Gentiles; and ſaying[g], what I think can ſcarce be ſuppoſed to be ſaid to Jews. But perhaps this epiſtle was written after the death of Peter and Paul, the apoſtles of the devout and idolatrous Gentiles.

Peter, indeed, after he had preached to theſe Jews from the year 33 to the year 41, went by eſpecial direction from God, and preached to Cornelius and his family, proſelytes of the gate; who are called Gentiles, and were ſo by nation, but not by religion; and had pecu-

[c] 1 John i. 1.
[d] Ver. i. Vide Mill. in. loc.
[f] Ibid.
[g] Ver. 5.

liar

liar privileges among the Jews, on account of their worſhiping the one true God, and of their abſtaining from things offered to idols, fornication, things ſtrangled, and from blood; and who may be conſidered as free denizens among them[h]. And to theſe Peter ſeems to have written his two epiſtles, as his more peculiar province. For he addreſſes his firſt epiſtle "to the ſtrangers ſcattered through "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Aſia, and Bi-"thynia, elect according to the foreknow-"ledge of God the father, through ſanctifica-"tion of the Spirit unto obedience, and "ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus[i]." Theſe characters cannot belong to Jews, any more than that of "ſtrangers ſcattered through "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Aſia, and By-"thinia;" and which he repeats, ver. 17. and chap. ii. ver. 11.; where the word is παροίκους, by which the Septuagint uſes to denote "the proſelytes of the gate." To this purpoſe St. Peter ſays[k], "who (Chriſt) verily was "foreordained before the foundation of the "the world, but was manifeſt in theſe laſt "times for you," that is, "you Gentiles;" wherefore he ſays, that the angels deſire to look into the things which the prophets propheſied ſhould come unto you, and which are now reported unto you by them that have

[h] See the Fourth Eſſay. [i] 1 Pet. i. 12.
[k] Ver. 20.

preached

preached the goſpel unto you by the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from heaven, agreeably to what St. Paul tells the Epheſians[l] about the angels; and what there is manifeſtly the myſtery of preaching the goſpel to the Gentiles, and admitting them to the fellowſhip of the ſaints[m]. But what muſt put it out of doubt that they were not Jews, is, that Peter tells them[n], "that in time paſt they were not "a people, but were now a people; which "had not obtained mercy, but now have "obtained mercy; and were become," "even in a more excellent ſenſe than the "Jews, "a choſen generation, a royal "prieſthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, "to his praiſe, who had called them out of "darkneſs," (that is, when they became proſelytes of the gate; and at laſt) "into his "marvellous light" of the goſpel. This is the moſt diſtinguiſhing character of the idolatrous Gentiles, being the words of the commiſſion given to St. Paul, when he was firſt ſent to convert them[o]. And it is obſervable that the word λαὸς, which is rendered "people" in our verſion, is uſed by the writers of the N. T. of Jews only: ſo that, when it is ſaid they were not a people, it is ſtrongly aſſerting that they were not Jews; but are now in-

[l] Chap. iii. 10. [m] Ver. 2—12. [n] Chap. ii. 10.
[o] Acts xxvi. 18. alluding to Iſaiah ix. 1, 2. and to Mal. iv. 15, 16.

deed

deed become the people of God. And the ſame apoſtle alſo ſays[p], "not faſhioning your-"ſelves according to the former luſts in your "ignorance:" From hence likewiſe he aſſerts[q], "that he who lacketh theſe things," that is, faith, virtue, knowledge &c. "is blind" (morally ſo); alluding to the darkneſs and ignorance in which they had been before they became worſhipers of the true God: and bids them "abſtain from fleſhly luſts;" the luſts of the Gentiles, whoſe character it is "to work all "uncleanneſs with greedineſs; among whom "they had their converſation[r]:" but from which they, even "as ſtrangers" or proſelytes of the gate, but much more as chriſtians, were to abſtain. And beſides, he ſays, moſt unexceptionably to this purpoſe[s], "For the time "paſt of our lives may ſuffice us to have "wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we "walked in laſciviouſneſs, luſts, exceſs of "wine, revellings, banquetings, and abomi-"nable idolatries." From hence it is that St. Peter addreſſes his ſecond epiſtle (written to the ſame perſons as the firſt[t]) "to them who "have obtained like faith with us" that is, us Jews "through the righteouſneſs of God, "and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt[u]." And that epiſtle alſo ſeems to diſtinguiſh them from the

[p] 1 Pet. i. 14.
[q] 2 Pet. i. 9.
[r] 1 Pet. ii. 11, 12.
[s] Chap. iv. 3—6.
[t] 2 Pet. iii. 1.
[u] Ibid. i. 1.

Jewiſh

Jewiſh nation [w]. But there were "falſe pro-"phets among the people" (ἐν τῷ λαῷ, the Jewiſh people), "as there ſhall be falſe teach-"ers among you." Finally, that it was written to Gentiles, may be fairly collected from 1 Pet. iii. 6. "whoſe daughters (Sarah's) ye "are as long as ye do well;" that is, imitate her, as the Gentiles become the children of Abraham, by imitating him. But there was no reaſon to ſay that they were Sarah's daughters if they had been Jews. Tertullian and Cyprian accordingly quote the firſt epiſtle of Peter, as the epiſtle of Peter to thoſe of Pontus, citing it under the title "Epiſtola Petri "ad Ponticos [x]." Junilius inſcribes it "Epiſ-"tola ad Gentes," or the epiſtle to the Gentiles [y]. Nor can this epiſtle be written to the idolatrous Gentiles of thoſe places, any more than to the Jews; but to ſuch converted Gentile worſhipers of the true God, of every nation, as happened to be ſcattered among them. "Strangers" is the ſtyle belonging to theſe. The idolatrous Gentiles were never called ſtrangers ſimply, and without any other addition: but ſuch only as (though Gentiles) were the worſhipers of the true God, and might, if they pleaſed, live in Paleſtine; yet ſtill as "ſtran-

[w] 2 Pet. ii. 1.

[x] Tert. Scorpiac. c. xii. and Cypr. lib. iii. ad Quirin. c. 36, 37. 39.

[y] Lib. i. de Part Div. Legis c. 6. See Mill. 1 Pet. i. 1.

"gers

" gers to the commonwealth of Iſrael, and the " covenant of promiſe." St. Peter, therefore, diſtinguiſhes them from Gentiles[z]: " Having " (ſays he), your converſation honeſt among " the Gentiles," that is, the idolatrous Gentiles; " that whereas they ſpeak againſt you " as evil-doers, they may by your good works, " which they ſhall behold, glorify God in the " day of their viſitation. What may farther ſerve to ſhew that Peter wrote to proſelytes of the the gate, is, that when he preaches to Cornelius and his family, the firſt-fruits of the proſelytes of the gate[a], he ſays, " of a truth " I perceive that God is no reſpecter of perſons, " but, in every nation, he that feareth him, " and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with " him." And in this epiſtle he ſpeaks in the ſame ſtrain[b]; " and if ye call on the Father, " who, without reſpect of perſons, judgeth ac- " cording to every man's work, paſs the time " of your ſojourning here in fear." And ſo likewiſe he uſes the very peculiar phraſe here, which he uſes concerning Cornelius and his family[c], " God giving them the Holy Ghoſt, " and purifying their hearts by faith," (καθαρίσας τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν,) alluding to the commiſſion he had received from the Lord in a viſion, to go and preach peace to the proſelytes of the gate, in theſe words, " what God

[z] Pet. ii. 12.
[a] Acts x. 34, 35.
[b] 1 Pet. i. 17.
[c] Acts xv. 9.

" has

"has cleanſed" (or purified, ἐκαθάρισε), that "call not thou common or unclean[d]." And here[e], "ſeeing ye have purified your ſouls in "obeying the truth through the Spirit, ſee "that ye love one another with a pure heart "fervently" (ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας); and 2 Pet. i. 9. to this purpoſe, he ſays, that "he that lack-"eth theſe things," namely, the chriſtian virtues he had been exhorting them to abound in ver. 5—9.) "is blind, and cannot" (it ſhould be "will not") (μυωπάζων), "ſee afar off, and "hath forgotten that he was purged," (or purified, or his purification, τῦ καθαρισμῦ) "from "his former ſins." This expreſſion ſeems to me to point to the proſelytes of the gate; as "much as opening the eyes, and turning from "darkneſs to light, and from Satan unto God," does to the idolatrous Gentiles. Wherefore, from Peter's uſing the ſame expreſſions in this epiſtle, as he does Acts x. and xv; one may naturally conclude, that he writes here to the ſame ſort of perſons, that he preached to, Acts x; and ſpoke of, Acts xv. And, to confirm my opinion the more, I would obſerve that he uſes an expreſſion to them, at the end of this epiſtle, that ſeems to be appropriated to the proſelytes of the gate who believed[f]; "If "any man ſuffer as a chriſtian, &c." Now the diſciples were firſt called chriſtians at

[d] Acts x. 15. [e] 1 Pet. i. 22. [f] Chap. iv. 16.

Antioch;

Antioch[f]; a church conſiſting chiefly, if not wholly, of proſelytes of the gate; as I ſhall make appear more fully in the Fourth Eſſay; as I alſo ſhall what I apprehend was the reaſon of their taking that peculiar appellation, towards the end of this Eſſay. And what makes me lay the greater ſtreſs on this expreſſion "as a chriſtian" is, that I do not remember any of the other apoſtles ever uſe it in any of their epiſtles, either to believing Jews, or to the believers among the idolatrous Gentiles. And that the ſecond epiſtle was addreſſed to the ſame with the firſt, we learn from 2 Pet. iii. 1. Perhaps St Peter's writing to proſelyted Gentiles, converted to chriſtianity, may have been the reaſon why he ſent his letter by Silvanus or Silas; who uſed to travel over all theſe parts with St. Paul, converting the Gentiles, and confirming them; and why he gives him his Roman, and not his Jewiſh name (Silvanus, and not Silas) the name he himſelf uſes, when he writes to the Gentile believers[g].

If it be objected that Peter addreſſes his epiſtle παρεπιδήμοις διασπορᾶς, &c.; as James, one of the diſciples of the circumciſion, addreſſes his δώδεκα φυλαῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ, "to the "twelve tribes diſperſed;" I anſwer, that the διασπορὰ may be applyed to diſperſed Gentiles,

[f] Acts xi. 26. [g] 1 Theſ. i. 1. 2 Theſ. i. 1.

as

as well as Jews: and is ſo evidently John vii. 35. "And the Jews ſaid among themſelves, "Whither will he go, that we ſhall not find "him? will he go unto the diſperſed among "the Gentiles (it ſhould be "to the diſperſion "of the Gentiles"), "and teach the Gentiles?" εἰς τὴν διασπορὰν τῶν Ἑλλήνων μέλλει πορεύεσθαι, καὶ διδάσκειν τοὺς Ἕλληνας; and not only the grammar ſhews it ought to be rendered "the "diſperſion of the Gentiles," and not "the "diſperſed among the Gentiles," but the ſentence that follows, "and teach the Gentiles?" and the Syriack verſion, the moſt accurate of any, renders it, "the diſperſion of the profane," that is, the heathen, "and teach the profane." And ſo that excellent critic Caſtalio renders it, "Num in diſperſas Græcorum nationes "diſceſſurus eſt, docturuſque Græcos?" And we read of the "diſperſed children of God[h]," in oppoſition to the Jewiſh nation, οὐχ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους μόνον, ἀλλ' ἵνα καὶ τὰ τέκνα τοῦ Θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα συναγάγω εἰς ἕν.

St. John, indeed, by expreſs direction "from him who holdeth the ſeven ſtars in his "right hand, and who walketh in the midſt "of the golden candleſticks[i]," writes to the ſeven churches of Aſia. But it muſt be obſerved, that, if thoſe he writes to in thoſe ſeven churches were Gentiles, yet it was long after the death of St. Paul and Barnabas,

[h] John xi. 52. [i] Rev. ii. 1.

their two apoſtles: the book of the Revelation having been written in the year 96, and Paul ſuffered martyrdom an. 67. and Barnabas, in all likelihood, before that. Though I ſhould rather incline to think, that what was written to the churches in thoſe cities, was written to the believing Jews there only. At leaſt that is pretty plain, in the caſe of the church of Pergamos [k], of Thyatira [l], which Grotius ſays was compoſed of Jews [m], of Philadelphia [n]; and perhaps of Epheſus too [o]. And if what he wrote to theſe four churches was written to believing Jews, we may well conclude that the other three epiſtles were ſo too. This, I think, may ſerve to remove this objection, if theſe epiſtles were actually written to thoſe ſeven churches, and are not to be underſtood in a myſtical ſenſe; as repreſenting the ſtate of the chriſtian church, in a future ſeptenary period, as ſome very good judges have thought.

And as the apoſtles of the circumciſion preached and wrote to Jews only, and Peter to the Jews or proſelytes of the gate; ſo Paul is ſent to the idolatrous Gentiles, and chiefly preached and wrote to them: at leaſt when he preached or wrote in the character of an apoſtle, after his becoming one. He is

[k] Rev. ii. 12. 14. [l] Ver. 20.
[m] Grot. on Revel. ii. 18. [n] Rev. iii. 9.
[o] Ibid. ii. 7.

ſent

ſent only to them, as he himſelf relates the matter[p]. Accordingly he firſt preaches to Sergius Paulus, at his deſire; then to the idolatrous Gentiles at Antioch in Piſidia, at theirs: and travels through all the Leſſer Aſia, Macedonia, Greece, Italy, and, perhaps Spain, preaching to them. He often aſſures us, that he was "the apoſtle of the Gentiles." He tells the Romans[q], "I ſpeak to you, "Gentiles, inaſmuch as I am the apoſtle of "the Gentiles; I magnify my office." And he makes this his character, his excuſe for writing to them ſo freely[r], "Nevertheleſs, I "have written the more boldly to you, in "ſome ſort, as putting you in mind of the "grace that is given me of God, that I ſhould "be the miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt to the Gen-"tiles, miniſtring the goſpel of God; that "the offering up of the Gentiles might be ac-"ceptable; being ſanctified by the Holy "Ghoſt." Juſt as he had ſaid before[s], "That "Jeſus Chriſt was a miniſter of the circum-"ciſion;" who ſays of himſelf, that he was only "ſent to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of "Iſrael[t]." And on the account of this his character and office, as an apoſtle of the Gentiles, he writes to the Romans, as a part of his province, though he had never ſeen them[u].

[p] Acts xxvi. 17, 18.
[q] Rom. xi. 13.
[r] Ibid. xv. 18.
[s] Ver. 8.
[t] Luke xv. 24.
[u] Rom. i. 13.

For then he had been "no farther than the "borders of Illyricum[v]; that is, that part of Greece that joins to Illyricum. He alſo tells the Romans, "that he was their debtor; and "a debtor both to the Greeks and Barbarians, "both to the wiſe and unwiſe[w]," that is, all the Gentiles: ſpeaking in the ſtyle of the Greeks, who, being proud of their learning and politeneſs, called themſelves Greeks and the Wiſe, and all others the Barbarians and the Unwiſe. And Paul ſays, he is their debtor, inaſmuch as he was intruſted with the goſpel on their account; and had the diſpenſation of it committed to him for their ſakes. And therefore adds, that "he is ready to "preach the goſpel to them that are at Rome "alſo[x]." But ſays nothing of his being a debtor to the Jews as well as to the Gentiles: a phraſe that is very natural to him, when there is any occaſion for it. He likewiſe acquaints Timothy, a circumciſed Jew[y], "That "Chriſt gave himſelf a ranſom for all" (that is, for Gentiles as well as Jews), "to be teſti-"fied in due time" (that is, to be teſtified by me, in the time when God had prepared men and things for it; by ſpreading the goſpel firſt among the Jews, then among the devout Gentiles, and by the reſt of the Jews at laſt rejecting it), and "whereunto I am ordained a

[v] Rom. xv. 15.
[w] Ibid. i. 13—16.
[x] Ver. 15.
[y] 1 Tim. ii. 6, 7.

"preacher,

"preacher, and an apoſtle—a teacher of the "Gentiles in faith and verity" (that is, to teſtify which truth, namely, that he was a ranſom for all, in its due and proper time), "I "am ordained a preacher, and an apoſtle (that is, a witneſs and teacher) "of the Gentiles." St Paul likewiſe ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe [a]. Moreover he put himſelf under the ſame predicament with Barnabas (who was only an apoſtle of the Gentiles), and ranks himſelf with him, in oppoſition to the apoſtles of the Jews [b]. And St. Paul and Barnabas are acknowledged as apoſtles of the Heathens, or the Gentiles only, by the three great apoſtles; who challenged to themſelves, and the other apoſtles, the ſole character of apoſtles of the circumciſion; as St. Paul informs the Galatians: adding, that "he that wrought effectually in "Peter, to the apoſtleſhip of the circumciſion, "the ſame wrought mightily in me towards "the Gentiles [b]." And it is very remarkable, that he ſays this to the Galatians, when he is vindicating his own authority againſt his adverſaries: and when, we may ſuppoſe, he would therefore carry it as far as he could. Finally, Paul is a priſoner for many years on account of the goſpel that he preached to the Gentiles [c], glories in the chains he bears on

[a] 1 Tim. i. 11.
[b] Gal. iii. 8, 9.
[a] 1 Cor. ix. 1—7.
[c] Acts xxii. 21, 22.

that account[d]; and says,[e] "that his delive-
"rance out of the mouth of the lion" (Nero or Helius Cæsarienſis) was "that the preach-
"ing" (that is, of the Gentile goſpel) "might
"be fully known, and that all the Gentiles
"might hear."

It makes very much to this purpoſe to obſerve, that St. Paul ſpeaks of the goſpel that he preached to the Gentiles, 1. as a revelation made to him; and, 2. as his peculiar goſpel; at leaſt, as the goſpel of himſelf and Barnabas. I refer the reader for the proof of the firſt, to the Third Eſſay; and to what I have touched on this head before in this Eſſay. And I think he will be convinced of the truth of the ſecond, by the following texts: "By
"whom (Chriſt) we have received grace and
"apoſtleſhip for the obedience to the faith
"among all nations for his name[f]." "Now
"unto him that is of power to eſtabliſh you
"according to my goſpel; and the preaching
"of Jeſus Chriſt, according to the revelation
"of the myſtery which was kept ſecret ſince
"the world began; but now is made mani-
"feſt—to all nations[g]." "Moreover, bre-
"thren, I declare unto you the goſpel, which
"I preached unto you[h]." "And all things
"are of God, who hath reconciled us (Gen-

[d] Gal. iv. 17. Phil. i, 12, 13, 14. Col. i. 24.
[e] 2 Tim. iv. 17. [f] Rom. i. 5.
[g] Ibid. xvi, 15. [h] 1 Cor. xv, 1.

"tiles)

" tiles) to himſelf, and hath given us (Paul,
" or perhaps Paul and Barnabas) the myſtery
" of reconciliation: to wit, that God was in
" Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf.
" —And hath committed unto us the word of
" reconciliation. Now then we are ambaſſa-
" dors for Chriſt [i]." " But when it pleaſed
" God— to reveal his Son in me, that I might
" preach him among the heathens [k]." " But
" they had heard only that he—now preacheth
" the faith that he once deſtroyed [l]." " Then
" fourteen years after I went up to Jeruſalem
" —and communicated the goſpel which I
" now preach among the Gentiles [m]." " But
" when they ſaw that the goſpel of the uncir-
" cumciſion was committed to me (Paul), they
" gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of
" fellowſhip, that we ſhould go unto the hea-
" then [n]." " That the Gentiles ſhould be
" partakers of his promiſe in Chriſt by the
" goſpel; whereof I was made a miniſter.—
" Unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all
" ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould
" preach among the Gentiles, the unſearcha-
" ble riches of Chriſt [o]." " Which is the
" church whereof I am made a miniſter, ac-
" cording to the diſpenſation of God which is
" given to me, even the myſtery hid from ages,

[i] 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20. [k] Gal. i. 15, 16.
[l] Ver. 23. [m] Ibid. ii. 1, 2.
[n] Ver. 7. [o] Eph. iii. 6.

" To whom God would make known what is " the riches of the glory of this myſtery " among the Gentiles; which is Chriſt in " you, the Son of glory [p]." " For our goſpel " came not to you in word only [q]." " Where- " unto he called you by our goſpel [r]." " Ac- " cording to the glorious goſpel of the bleſſed " God, which was committed to my truſt [s]." " Whereunto I am ordained a preacher and " an apoſtle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith " and verity [t]." " But hath in due times " manifeſted his word through preaching, " which is committed unto me, according to " the commandment of God our Saviour [u]."

Agreeably to the character of an apoſtle of the Gentiles, he writes his epiſtles to churches that were full of idolatrous Gentiles converted to the faith: ſo much is acknowledged by all. And I am apt to believe (and ſhould be glad this matter might be thoroughly conſidered) that he wrote them only to believing Gentiles in thoſe churches. I think, when this matter is duely conſidered, it will appear, that Paul wrote his epiſtles to the Gentile believers only (if the believing Jews and Gentiles did uſe to meet in one aſſembly, and had not ſeparate ones), from the character he takes to himſelf in thoſe epiſtles, the characters

[p] Col. i. 24, 25.
[q] 1 Theſſ. i. 5.
[r] 2 Theſſ. ii. 14.
[s] 1 Tim. i. 11.
[t] Ibid. ii. ver. 6, 7.
[u] Tit. i. 3.

he

he gives thoſe he addreſſes himſelf to, and the ſtrain, and ſeveral particular paſſages, of the epiſtles themſelves. Though, I confeſs, in ſome of them, he introduces a Jew, that he may the better ſhew the Gentiles the falſeneſs of the Jewiſh reaſoning, or the vanity of their pretenſions [w]. Thus, I think, St. Paul wrote to the Gentiles; as the other apoſtles, at leaſt during the life of St. Paul, wrote only to the Jews, or proſelytes.

And though it ſeems plain to me that St. Paul wrote the epiſtle to the Hebrews, yet he does not write it in the character of an apoſtle, beginning the epiſtle, "Paul an "apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, &c." as he always does in his epiſtles to the Gentile churches; but, "God, who at ſundry times and in di- "vers manners ſpake unto the Fathers by the "prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken "unto us by his Son [x], &c." Nor does he ever in that epiſtle give them any order or commandment, or exerciſe any act of authority; on the contrary, he points their obedience to others, and, in my apprehenſion, to the Jewiſh apoſtles reſiding at Jeruſalem [y]; and deſires only their prayers for himſelf [z].

[w] Particularly, Rom. ii. and vii. Col. ii. 20. ad fin. and iii. 1—5.

[x] See the Firſt Eſſay. [y] Heb. xiii. 17.

[z] Ver. 18. See the Firſt Eſſay, and the Abſtract.

And

And though St. Paul always firſt preached to the Jews, wherever there were Jews in the places to which he came; and ſays himſelf, that "he had teſtified" (the word which I own denotes the manner of preaching peculiar to an apoſtle) "to Jews as well as "Greeks[a];" yet it is plain he did not go to thoſe places in queſt of Jews, but of Gentiles. And that he firſt teſtified, or preached, to Jews in thoſe places where there were both Jews and Gentiles, was, as I apprehend, to take away the pretence of complaint, or offence, from the Jews, which they might have had, if the goſpel had not been firſt offered to them, and their furious oppoſition to it (for which reaſon alſo he offers it to the Gentiles only, after the Jews had rejected it); as alſo, that he might, if poſſible, provoke his brethren the Jews to jealouſy (as he ſays on the like occaſion, Rom. xi. 14.). But I do not find that he acts in the character of an apoſtle towards them, in any other way than that of teſtifying to them. At leaſt, we have no inſtance of his conferring the Holy Ghoſt on thoſe Jews to whom he teſtified; or of his inflicting bodily diſtempers on any of them, for the offences any of them committed; or of his working any of his ſpecial miracles among them. Unleſs we ſuppoſe Timothy a Jew; who was indeed a Jew by the law of

[a] Acts xx. 21.

Judæa,

Judæa, as born of a Jewiſh woman, but his father was a Greek [b].

I can by no means think the epiſtle uſually aſcribed to Barnabas to be his: yet it is evidently writ to the Gentiles; as may plainly appear, pag. 163. 165. 174, 175. 185. in the tranſlation of it by our moſt reverend Primate, Dr. Wake. Which makes me very much ſurprized to find his Grace ſay, in his diſſertation concerning Barnabas (in which, I confeſs, however, his Grace is far from being ſingular) that this epiſtle was written to the Jews: thoſe paſſages which I refer to making it clear beyond all exception that it was written to the Gentiles; and there being none, that ſeem to me to give much colour to the contrary opinion. However, this epiſtle is a very antient forgery; and may ſerve to ſhew, that the perſon who forged it, writing it to the Gentiles, knew well that his character was that of an apoſtle of the Gentiles; and that it was therefore forging in character to addreſs his epiſtle to thoſe of his own province.

It may, perhaps, be objected againſt what I have advanced "of the ſeparate provinces of "the apoſtles of the Jews and of the Gen-"tiles," that it would be ſtrange, if none of the twelve apoſtles ſhould have preached to the Gentiles, when our Saviour commands the

[b] Acts, chap. xvi.

eleven "to go, and preach the gospel to all "nations (μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη)[c];" and, as Mark relates it, to "go into all the world, "and preach the gospel to every creature[d]." But I hope it will be thought a sufficient answer to this difficulty,

1. That Peter and the rest of the apostles preached the gospel, at the feast of Pentecost[e], "to Jews, devout men out of every nation "dwelling at Jerusalem." It is the same word (ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἔθνους τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν) but with a stronger expression added to it. And thus the apostles and first christians understood Christ's commission; for when they went out of Judæa, "they preached to the "Jews only[f]."

2. That Peter first preached to the proselytes of the gate[g]. And, it is very probable, preached to them at other times, and other places, afterwards; since he writes to them that were scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia[h], and writes to them as if he had formerly preached or written to them: for he writes "to put them "in remembrance[i]," and writes in several parts of both his epistles, as being well acquainted with them and their affairs.

[c] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[d] Mark xvi. 15.
[e] Acts ii. 5.
[f] Ibid. xi. 19.
[g] Ibid. chap. x.
[h] 1 Pet. i. 1.
[i] 2 Pet. i. 12.

3. If

3. If this will not ſatisfy, yet let it be conſidered, that Paul and Barnabas went and preached to the idolatrous Gentiles, or the nations, or, as St. Paul ſays, "to every crea-"ture under heaven [k]." And though they were not of the eleven, to whom Chriſt perſonally gave the commiſſion, yet they had the ſame office with them. So that the meaning of our Saviour is, "Go ye, or ſuch as ſhall be "afterwards in the ſame office with you (that "is, Matthias, Paul, and Barnabas), and teach "all nations. Or, Go ye into all the world, "and preach to every creature; that is, to "people of every country, age, ſex, rank, and "diſtinction;" as the fourteen apoſtles did: having preached Chriſt to high and low, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, Jew and Gentile, Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free.

However, though I am of opinion that the Jewiſh and Gentile apoſtles had their diſtinct provinces, yet I am withal apt to think, that the proſelytes of the gate were of a mixt province: and that as Peter preached, and addreſſed epiſtles to them, ſo did Paul too; which gives Peter occaſion to ſay, in the end of his ſecond epiſtle [l], "And account that the long "ſuffering of our Lord is ſalvation, even as "our brother Paul alſo, according to the wiſ-"dom given him, hath written unto you; as "alſo in his other epiſtles." Which writing

[k] Col. i. 24. [l] Chap. iii. 15. 17.

to

to them, Peter diſtinguiſhing from all his other epiſtles, would make one apt to conclude that Paul had writ ſome epiſtle to the ſtrangers ſcattered, or the proſelytes of the gate, converted to chriſtianity, which is not come to our hands; eſpecially ſince what Peter refers to in Paul's epiſtles is not very obvious in any of thoſe epiſtles of his which we have.

It does not ſuit with my deſign, to enter into the particular tempers of theſe twelve prime miniſters of the kingdom of Chriſt; or to ſhew from paſſages and hints in ſcripture that Peter was always preſident of the apoſtles whilſt they continued together, by virtue of Jeſus's appointment; though, after they diſperſed and left Jeruſalem, James ſeems to have preſided when they met there; how each of their tempers was ſuited to their high office; and how all theſe different tempers, by a happy mixture and agreement, combined to the farthering of the goſpel: in which the wiſdom of God in chooſing them, and giving them to Jeſus, would appear. But it may not be improper to ſay ſomething of their number; and of the very different characters of the twelve apoſtles of the Jews, and of the two apoſtles of the Gentiles.

I do not pretend to be able to enter preciſely into the reaſons, why our Saviour appointed but twelve apoſtles firſt, and two afterwards,

wards, in all but fourteen: and why he choſe illiterate and ignorant men, of the loweſt calling and occupation, for the firſt twelve; and men of letters and education for the two laſt; namely Barnabas a Levite, and Paul who was a tentmaker (according to the known cuſtom of the Jews, who always bred up their children to ſome trade), but brought up, at the ſame time in all the learning of the Jews, at the feet of Gamaliel; as Moſes had been in all the learning of the Egyptians, at Pharaoh's court. But thus much, I think, in general, fairly offers itſelf, on both theſe heads, to our obſervation.

It was not proper to have only two or three for witneſſes of the facts, and teachers of the doctrine of chriſtianity; leſt there might have been a pretence to ſuſpect them of conſpiracy: which, to be ſure, two or three are always more capable of carrying on than fourteen. And, on the other hand, it was not fit to have a great many; leſt there ſhould not have been ſo apparent and viſible a diſtinction between the witneſſes and the teachers, and thoſe to whom the facts and the doctrines were to be imparted. By which diſtinction the truth of their teſtimony and doctrine was to receive a great confirmation. Since by this means fourteen private men, and they only, could vouch theſe facts and doctrines, in a manner which muſt convince all that were well

well diſpoſed, where they came. And when one of theſe witneſſes betrayed Jeſus, and then preſently hanged himſelf, for betraying him (thereby bearing witneſs to the innocence of Jeſus); the reſt, not at all diſcouraged at this man's fate, preſently propoſe another witneſs ſhould be appointed to fill up his place. This, by the way, Providence directed them to do, before the feaſt of Pentecoſt was fully come; that ſo he, being added to the eleven before that time, might, together with them, receive the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt; to qualify him to be a witneſs, and a revealer of the chriſtian doctrine, as well as the reſt.

The men of birth and education were generally too bigoted to the opinions and temper of the Phariſees, to embrace the doctrine of Chriſt, or too worldly-minded to leave the care of their affairs, and the purſuits of their deſigns, and expoſe themſelves to the fury of the Jews, to become his diſciples, and follow him; eſpecially in ſuch a manner as it was neceſſary for thoſe to do, who were to be his apoſtles; that is, to be always with him, or to be ſent out by him. We ſee how ſome of theſe paſſions wrought on men otherwiſe well diſpoſed to him, as Nicodemus, and Joſeph of Arimathea. Beſides, that our Saviour might have been unwilling to take men of birth and education for his apoſtles and companions, if they had been willing to follow him;

him; leſt it might have created in the government a jealouſy of his deſigns. But I ſhall chiefly inſiſt on two other reaſons for Jeſus's taking illiterate men for the twelve, as being moſt ſuited to my purpoſe. It was proper to take ſuch for the twelve, rather than men of learning and experience; that ſo they might follow Jeſus in his life-time, without prying too much into the deſigns of his coming into the world: which was not to take temporal power, but to die by the wicked hands of Jews and Gentiles. Men of learning, parts, or buſineſs, with the temper and notions which prevailed univerſally among the people to whom he was ſent, would not have been kept eaſily in that dependance, without enquiring much earlier than they did (long before the time of his approaching crucifixion) when, and how, he would have ſet up his kingdom in the world? and if they had not received an anſwer, from ſeeing no likelihood of its being effected at all; or if they had been told, that it was to be done by his being crucified; from the ſuppoſed unfitneſs of the means, they would, in all probabily, have taken offence, and have left him, as others did upon other occaſions. Such men were neither capable of bearing to be put off without an anſwer; nor of the anſwer that muſt have been given them. Our Saviour, therefore, choſe theſe honeſt illiterate

men, who, from a high opinion of his wiſdom, and a very low one of their own capacities, followed him whitherſoever he went; without having many difficulties occurr to their own thoughts, and without troubling him with thoſe they had: leaving them all to his conduct; from a full perſuaſion, that he would overcome them. All thoſe who (being given him by God out of the world) thus loved him, and believed on him, he kept; but the ſon of perdition: a man of a falſe, injurious, covetous, and greedy mind. And when our Saviour left his apoſtles, and aſcended up to heaven, what ſtrength did it give to the evidence of his religion, that theſe twelve mean, illiterate, men, ſhould have the courage and the ability to teſtify the great facts relating to Jeſus of Nazareth, and teach his doctrine to all the people of Jeruſalem (where he had been crucified but a little before), and even to the rulers, who had not only great power, but, as was generally thought, the ſole knowledge of the law; and ſhould dare to do it, notwithſtanding their menaces, their ſcourging, their impriſonment, and at laſt the putting one of them (James) to death. This we ſee ſtruck the rulers themſelves, thoſe obſtinate enemies of Jeſus. For perceiving the "boldneſs of theſe "apoſtles, men that were illiterate and igno-

"rant,"

"rant," they perceived it muſt be "from "their having been with Jeſus[m]."

But after that the religion of Chriſt was received by vaſt multitudes of Jews and devout Gentiles, objections againſt men of education ceaſed; and the reaſons turned quite another way. Two men of letters are therefore ſent, to reaſon with the Gentiles, and recover them to the knowledge of the one living true God, for which knowledge and learning was highly conducive, and to teſtify and preach the goſpel to the Gentiles. They could not then pry too cloſely into the facts and doctrines of chriſtianity. They would only thereby acquire a more enlarged and extenſive view of the excellency and comprehenſion of this diſpenſation of religion; and from thence be brought with St. Paul, in holy rapture, to think of "the height and depth, "the length and breadth of the love of God "in it, that paſſeth knowledge;" and with him, to ſay within themſelves, "how un-"ſearchable are his judgements, and his ways "of mercy paſt finding out!"

But as the Gentiles ſought after a vain philoſophy which they called wiſdom, and fine elocution which they called eloquence; Paul renounced the falſe philoſophy of the ſchools, and was rendered of a ſtammering ſpeech, and a mean appearance; that ſo that ſucceſs he had

[m] Acts iv. 13.

in preaching the goſpel might appear to be of God, and not of man [n].

Theſe exalted thoughts of it muſt neceſſarily puſh them on to undergo all fatigues, and run all hazards, in propagating it to the world; make them more fit to diſpute with Jews, and heathen philoſophers; to bring down every high thing, and proud imagination againſt the knowledge of God, and captivate every thought to the obedience of Chriſt; and render them the more likely to convince mankind, that nothing but the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt evidence could have turned men of their knowledge and zeal in the Jewiſh religion, and the peculiar intereſt one of them (a Levite) had in it, to embrace the faith of Jeſus. and run this infinite toil, reproach, and hazard, to ſpread it in the world.

Before I finiſh what I have to offer about the apoſtles, I will take this occaſion to compare Paul with "the apoſtles of the circum-"ciſion," and, chiefly, with Peter and John, the greateſt of them; the better to make out St. Paul's aſſertion, that he was "not a whit "behind the very greateſt of the apoſtles [o].

Were they ſent by God and Chriſt? ſo was he [p]. Did three of them ſee the moſt excellent glory, and hear a voice from it, at

[n] See the Third Eſſay. [o] 2 Cor. xi. 5.
[p] Acts xxii. 17, 18. 21. xxvi. 17.

Chriſt's

Chriſt's transfiguration in the mount? ſo did he, in the road to Damaſcus. Did they receive inſtructions from Chriſt on earth, touching the goſpel they were to preach? and from the Spirit after his aſcenſion? St. Paul was not only filled with the Holy Ghoſt[q]; but had all the goſpel he was to preach revealed to him immediately by Chriſt[r]. Had Peter, whilſt he was in a trance (being at prayer on a houſe-top), a viſion of the Lord, to commiſſion him to go to the proſelytes of the gate; and the matter he was to preach to them, taught him by that revelation? Paul, falling into a trance, had alſo a viſion of Chriſt, whilſt he was praying in the temple; received a commiſſion to go and preach to the idolatrous Gentiles, and a revelation of what he was to teach them. Did they ſee Chriſt aſcend, till a cloud of glory took him out of their ſight; and receive a meſſage from angels to ſtrengthen their faith? He was caught up into Paradiſe, and the third heaven, and "heard unſpeakable things, that it is not lawful for a man to utter[s]," to encourage him in his work. Had St. John great knowledge of future events about the church? ſo had St. Paul; he having communicated to us, not only the myſtery of the caſting off the Jews, of the recalling them, and of the bringing in

[q] Acts ix. 17. [r] Gal. i. 12.
[s] 2 Cor. xii. 2. 4. See the Third Eſſay.

the fulneſs of the Gentiles; but the myſtery of iniquity, that was to corrupt the doctrine of the goſpel. Whilſt we have an account but of one or two viſions of Peter's, we have an account of ſeven of Paul's[t]. Does Peter rebuke Simon Magus with all authority[u]? Paul reprimands Elymas with no leſs[w]. Did Peter once ſtrike Ananias and Sapphira dead, two believers, who diſſembled and lyed to the Holy Ghoſt? Paul did not only ſtrike Elymas the ſorcerer blind, "when he perverted the right "ways of the Lord;" but had a rod committed to him for edification, and not for deſtruction; and delivered over to Satan, for the deſtruction of the fleſh, "that the Spirit might "be ſaved in the day of the Lord, that wicked "men might learn not to blaſpheme." Did St. Peter and John cure a cripple, lame from his mother's womb, at the temple? ſo did Paul at Lyſtra. Did Peter's ſhadow cure the ſick? ſo did handkerchiefs ſent from Paul's body[x]. Did Peter raiſe Dorcas? Paul alſo raiſed Eutychus[y]. Did God vouchſafe to ſend his angel to open the priſon-doors, to deliver Peter[z]? ſo did God likewiſe by a great earthquake ſhake the foundations of the pri-

[t] Acts ix. 8. xxii. 18. compared with 2 Cor. xii. 2. Gal. ii. 12. Acts xvi. 9. xviii. 9, 10. xxiii. 11. and xxvii. 23, 24.

[u] Acts viii. 20—24.

[w] Ibid. xiii. 10, 11.

[x] Ibid. xix. 12.

[y] Ibid. xx. 12.

[z] Ibid xii. 7—11.

ſon,

ſon, into which Paul and Silas were caſt at Philippi, and opened all the doors [a].

In other reſpects Paul elegantly compares himſelf with them. "I ſpeak as concerning "reproach, as though we had been weak; "howbeit, whereinſoever any is bold (I ſpeak "fooliſhly), I am bold alſo. Are they He- "brews? ſo am I. Are they Iſraelites? ſo "am I. Are they the ſeed of Abraham? ſo "am I. Are they miniſters of Chriſt? (I "ſpeak as a fool) I am more: in labours more "abundant, in ſtripes above meaſure, in pri- "ſons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the "Jews five times received I forty ſtripes "ſave one; thrice was I beaten with rods, "once was I ſtoned, thrice I ſuffered ſhip- "wreck, a night and a day I have been in the "deep. In journeyings often, in perils of "waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by "mine own countrymen, in perils by the "heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in "the wilderneſs, in perils in the ſea, in perils "among falſe brethren. In wearineſs and "painfulneſs, in watching often, in hunger "and thirſt, in faſtings often, in cold and "nakedneſs: beſides thoſe things that are "without, that which cometh upon me daily, "the care of all the churches. Who is weak, "and I am not weak? who is offended, and "I burn not? If I muſt needs glory, I will

[a] Acts xvi. 25, 26.

" glory of the things which concern mine in-
" firmities. The God and Father of our Lord
" Jeſus Chriſt, which is bleſſed for evermore
" knoweth, that I lye not. In Damaſcus,
" the governor under Aretas the king kept
" the city of Damaſcenes, with a garriſon,
" deſirous to apprehend me; and through a
" window, in a baſket, was I let down by the
" wall, and eſcaped his hands [b]."

Upon the whole, I think, the apoſtles may be very properly ſaid to be chief and primary miniſters of the kingdom of Chriſt, commiſſioned and commanded by God to witneſs the reſurrection of Chriſt, on their having ſeen and heard him, after he was riſen from the dead, and the other great facts of chriſtianity, as far as they had been eye or ear-witneſſes of them; and to publiſh the doctrines and myſteries of the goſpel; being firſt endued with ſuperior courage, in order to enable them the better to teſtify and publiſh the goſpel, to the greateſt audience, and in times of the greateſt danger; and veſted with extraordinary and uncommon powers of inflicting grievous diſtempers and death on obſtinate offenders, and of curing diſeaſes, and of imparting tha Holy Ghoſt to believers, for the confirmation of the truth of what they were to teſtify, teach, and foretell.

[b] 2 Cor. xi. 21—33.

Thus

Thus I have conſidered the apoſtles, in their general, ſpecial, and comparative characters. It ſeems a more difficult matter to fix the preciſe notion of an "Elder," as it ſtands here; the name occurring but once before this in the Acts, and then without any deſcription; "Then the diſciples—determined to ſend relief unto the brethren which "dwelt in Judea—which alſo they did, and "ſent it to the elders, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul[c]." It ſeems as if it was known that the apoſtles were abſent from Jeruſalem at this time; or how came the diſciples at Antioch to ſend it to the elders, and not to the apoſtles?

It is pretty plain that Peter was not then there; he having left the city, on his being delivered out of priſon by the angel[d]; and his being gone from Jeruſalem was, in all probability, one reaſon of Mark's going from Jeruſalem with Barnabas and Saul[c] (the other was that Mark was nephew to Barnabas[f], and that Barnabas had likewiſe been a great companion of Peter's, as well as Mark); as he, in all probability, left Paul and Barnabas, and returned to Jeruſalem[g], on hearing that Peter was then returned thither, on the death of Herod, who had put him in priſon.

[c] Acts xi. 29, 30. [d] Ibid. xii. 17. [e] Ver. 23.
[f] Col. iv. 10. [g] Acts xiii. 13.

For

For Mark affected Peter extremely, as he was extremely affected by him [h].

Beſides, it may be very juſtly inferred, that none of the apoſtles were preſent at Jeruſalem at this time, which was the ſecond time of Paul's being there after his converſion; becauſe Paul makes no mention of his being there this time, in his epiſtle to the Galatians, chap. i. when he mentions his being there the firſt and the third time after his converſion: whereas, if any of the apoſtles had been there at this time, it would have been neceſſary to the thread of his argument, to have given as particular an account of what had paſſed between him and the apoſtles at this ſecond time of his being there, as at the firſt, or third: his ſcope being to ſhew the Galatians, that he did not learn his goſpel from any of the apoſtles, but from Chriſt alone. To which end he tells them, that he ſaw none of the apoſtles the firſt time, but Peter and James; and that the third time, he would not let Titus be circumciſed; and was ſo far from learning from the three chief apoſtles, that he communicated his goſpel to them, and them only; and was owned as a fellow-apoſtle by them [i]. What reaſon can be imagined, why St. Paul did not give the Galatians as particular an account of what paſſed at the ſecond, as at the

[h] 1 Pet. v. 13. Acts xii. 12—23.
[i] Gal. ii. 1—11.

ſirſt and third time of his being at Jeruſalem, after his converſion; but that, there having been none of the apoſtles this ſecond time of his being there, it was altogether unneceſſary for him to ſay any thing to them about it?

And though ſome have thought, that by the elders, to whom the diſciples ſent their alms, the "elders of the Jewiſh nation" are meant; yet I think that very unlikely, for many reaſons, particularly theſe two: 1. Becauſe that the author of this hiſtory takes care that we ſhould not miſtake the elders of the Jewiſh nation, when they are meant on other occaſions; and in one particularly, where we are leſs liable to miſtake them than here, by diſtinguiſhing them accordingly [k], where he informs us, that the centurion "ſent the elders of the Jews to Jeſus." If Paul and Barnabas had delivered the alms to elders of the Jews, I doubt not but he would have added thoſe words "of the Jews" here, as he does there. 2. Becauſe it is evident that "the diſciples at Antioch determined to ſend relief to the brethren, which dwelt in Judæa [l];" by which the Jewiſh believers, and not the Jewiſh nation, are undoubtedly meant. Juſt as after he became an apoſtle of the idolatrous Gentiles, the alms, which he carried along with him, he carried from the Gentile

[k] Luke vi. 5. [l] Acts xi. 29.

to

to the Jewiſh believers, and not to ſuch as were barely of the Jewiſh nation [m]; according to the agreement made between the apoſtles of the Circumciſion and the two apoſtles of the Gentiles [n]. And that therefore he was by no means likely to put theſe alms into the hands of the elders of the Jewiſh nation, but of the elders of the church. Now, by the elders acting here in the abſence of the apoſtles, as well as by their being placed next to the apoſtles in the letter [o], it ſeems very plain that they held the next rank to the apoſtles. But what ſhould give them that rank, deſerves well to be conſidered.

It ſeems to me to have been this, "That "they were ſuch as had been the diſciples of "our Saviour, and had accompanied with "him from the beginning, heard his doctrine, "ſaw his miracles, and his perſon, as well "after as before his reſurrection from the "dead; and who, being of the one hundred "and twenty, at the feaſt of Pentecoſt, had "the Holy Ghoſt fell upon them, filling them "with a plentiful meaſure of his choiceſt "gifts, without the laying on of hands;" and who, if I miſtake not, are called "the apo-"ſtles company [p]."

[m] See Rom. xv. 25, 26, 27. 31. 1 Cor. xvi. 1. 2 Cor. ix. 1—15.
[n] Gal. ii. 10. [o] Acts xv. 23.
[p] Acts iv. 21.

As

As theſe were great and high "privileges "and endowments," they could not but "give "a man a rank in the church." Age gives a man a rank and authority in the world; eſpecially where it is attended with remarkable degrees of wiſdom and experience. This was all the authority that the elders of the children of Iſrael can well be ſuppoſed to have had, which are mentioned in Exodus, when Moſes, being ſent to the children of Iſrael [q], or to the elders of the children of Iſrael [r], went and gathered their elders together, or the fathers or heads of families; for ſo jealous a government as that of the Egyptians, and who oppreſſed the children of Iſrael ſo ſeverely, were not like to let them have any magiſtrates of their own nation. They were all under Egyptian taſk-maſters. And that theſe elders were not judges, or officers of the people, is plain, becauſe Moſes found no ſuch officers, or judges, among them; but appointed them, on finding the trouble of judging all cauſes himſelf, and on Jethro's advice, to eaſe himſelf of all cauſes in the firſt inſtance [s]. And this, if I miſtake not, is the firſt time that we meet with the word "Elder" in ſcripture. In analogy to theſe firſt elders, the ſeventy, and the chief magiſtrates

[q] Exod. iii. 11—16. [r] Ver. 18.

[s] Exod. xviii. 13—27. See Seld. de Syn. l. i. c. 15. p. 624. ed. Lond. See Exod. xviii. 25. xxiv. i. 9. Num. xi. 25.

of

of cities are called "the Elders, the Elders of "the People, or of the City," through the Old and New Teſtament. They were generally men of age and experience, but always taken from thoſe who were thought to be the moſt wiſe and prudent [t].

And in analogy to the firſt and ſecond ſort of elders among the Jews, it is highly probable, that thoſe Chriſtians who had been the firſt and oldeſt diſciples of Chriſt, and had thereby had ſuch advantages of being perſonally acquainted with the doctrines, miracles, and hiſtory of Chriſt, ſhould be ſtiled the Elders in the Chriſtian church, and have a rank in it accordingly. We ſee that being a Chriſtian early is always reckoned an honour. St. John ſays [u], "I write unto you, fathers, "becauſe ye have" (this vaſt advantage and peculiar privilege, to have) "known him that "was from the beginning" (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς); that is, Chriſt, as is plain from the context and the phraſe itſelf (τὸν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς). St. Paul ſpeaks of it as the glory of the Jewiſh believers, "that they firſt truſted in Chriſt [v]." And ſo

[t] See Vitring. de Synag. l. iii. part. 1. p. 613—620. And that Elders ſignified men of age and experience among the Jews, I think, will fully appear from 2 Kings xix. 2. though I do not remember that Vitringa quotes it. For there it is ſaid, that "Hezekiah ſent Eliakim——and the "elders of the prieſts."

[u] 1 John ii. 13. [v] Eph. i. 12.

St.

St. James ſays to the twelve tribes, "That "God begat them of his own will, that they "ſhould be a kind of firſt-fruits of his crea-"tures [w]" (or new creatures). And St. John gives this high character to the heavenly aſſembly, which he ſaw in viſion, that they "were the firſt-fruits unto God and to the "Lamb [x]. St. Luke mentions one Mnaſon of Cyprus, with a note of diſtinction, that he was "an old diſciple [y]." And St. Paul gives it as a mark of honour to the houſe of Stephanus and Epenetus, that "they were the "firſt-fruits of Achaia [z];" and to Andronicus and Junia, his kinſmen, "that they were in "Chriſt before him [a]." And I believe in this ſenſe we are to underſtand St. Paul, when he gives thanks to God for the Theſſalonians, "That God had choſen them from the be-"ginning [b]" (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς), or perhaps it ſhould be read ἀπαρχὰς), that he had choſen them to be the firſt-fruits, or the beginnings of converſion in Macedonia, which always had a greater portion of the gifts of the Spirit [c]; for ſo they were in that which was properly and antiently called Macedonia, which Philippi was not. And if Philippi be excluded, Theſſalonica was then the firſt-fruits of Ma-

[w] James i. 18.
[x] Rev. xiv. 4.
[y] Acts xxi. 16.
[z] 1 Cor. xvi. 15.
[a] Rom. xvi. 5. 7.
[b] 2 Theſſ. ii. 13.
[c] See p. 152.

cedonia.

cedonia. For St. Paul only paſſed through Amphipolis and Apollonia to go to Theſſalonica [d]. The ſenſe may be, that he thanks God that he had choſen them as the firſt-fruits of that part of Macedonia where Theſſalonica ſtood. I incline to this ſenſe the rather, becauſe it gives a particular force and beauty to St. Paul's thankſgiving for theſe Theſſalonians. In any other ſenſe there can be no reaſon aſſigned, why he ſhould thank God for chooſing them from the beginning, rather than others. For in any other ſenſe all other churches, as well as they, were choſen from the beginning.—And the advantage that age, either in years or chriſtianity, gave, we may learn from St. Paul's direction to Timothy [e], "Rebuke not "an elder (man), but intreat him as a father; "and the younger men as brethren; the elder "women as mothers, the younger as ſiſters, "with all purity:" And from the direction that St. Peter gives, 1 Pet. v. 5, 6. where, after he had deſcribed the duty of the elders, from ver. 1 to 5, he adds, "Likewiſe, ye "younger, ſubmit yourſelves unto the elder: "yea, all of you be ſubject one to another, "and be cloathed with humility: for God "reſiſteth the proud, and giveth grace to the "humble. Humble yourſelves therefore," &c. Nothing can be plainer, than that age

[d] Acts xvii. 1. [e] 1 Tim. v. 1, 2.

in

in years, or chriſtianity, or both, made the elder here, ſince the younger are only called upon to ſubmit to them, and ſince the reaſon for their ſubmiſſion is couched in the relation that the younger bear to the elder. And to ſhew the vaſt advantage that an elder had, in the view it ſtands in here (that is, one who from his early diſcipleſhip was well acquainted with the doctrines, miracles, and hiſtory of Chriſt), when they were going to fill up the room of Judas, Peter ſays [f], "Wherefore of theſe "men which have accompanied with us all "the time that the Lord Jeſus went in and "out among us, beginning from the baptiſm "of John, unto the ſame day that he was "taken up from us, muſt one be ordained to "be a witneſs with us of his reſurrection." Our Saviour tells his apoſtles, "And ye alſo "ſhall bear witneſs of me, becauſe ye have "been with me from the beginning" [g] (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς). St. John, knowing how much ſtreſs was laid on this reaſon for their being appointed witneſſes, ſays, in his Epiſtle [h], "That "which was from the beginning (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς), "which we have heard, which we have ſeen "with our eyes, which we have looked upon, "and our hands have handled of the word of "life—that—declare we unto you." And ſo likewiſe St. Luke ſays, "Foraſmuch as "many have taken in hand to ſet forth in

[f] Acts i. 21.
[g] John xv. 27.
[h] 1 John i. 1. 3.

"order a declaration of thoſe things which "are moſt ſurely believed among us, even as "they delivered them unto us, who from the "beginning were eye-witneſſes and miniſters "of the word[i]" (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται). And St. Peter ſeems to give it as a deſcription of what he meant by calling himſelf "an elder[k]," when he adds, "and a witneſs of the ſufferings "of Chriſt." In analogy to the advantage that an elder had in this view, in the times of the apoſtles, the αὐτόπται (thoſe who had ſeen Chriſt) were in high eſteem in the ſecond century; for this reaſon, as alſo for others which I ſhall mention ſoon[l], and the ἀπαρχαὶ or firſt chriſtian converts. After them the πρώτη διαδοχὴ (the firſt ſucceſſion, or thoſe who had ſeen them that were contemporaries with the apoſtles) were afterwards had in great veneration. Such were Irenæus and his contemporaries, as mentioned by Euſebius. And the eſteem paid to the αὐτόπται and the πρώτη διαδοχὴ had not only that foundation in things on which I have juſt now hinted, but was derived from this firſt notion of elders, in the view that is now under conſideration. And on this account it is, that *ſeniores* and *preſbyteri* ſometimes ſignify men of age, and not of office, even ſo low down as Irenæus and Tertullian, who ſtile ſome ſo, whom

[i] Luke i. 12.
[k] 1 Pet. v. 1.
[l] P. 152.

they

they themſelves had ſeen, who had heard and ſeen the apoſtles [m]. The αὐτόπται anſwer to the original elders, or to thoſe of the one hundred and twenty, who are called "the "apoſtles company." The ἀπαρχαὶ are the ſecondary elders, or the firſt converts of particular countries and churches; who, having the choiceſt gifts imparted to them, are made or pointed out by the Holy Ghoſt to be overſeers. The πρώτη διαδοχὴ anſwer to the third or loweſt ſort of elders, or the moſt knowing and graveſt men, who are fitteſt to be made overſeers and deacons, when *ordo* could no longer be conſidered, but the mere merit and ordinary qualifications.

But if to this advantage, which the ſtate of things gave them above other chriſtians, we add the "diſtinction that the Holy Ghoſt "put upon them, by falling on them," without the intervention of others, and "filling "them" with an uncommon meaſure of the choicer gifts, there is little room left to doubt, whether theſe two together, giving them ſo great an advantage, did not, in conſequence, give them an high rank and eſteem above others. I do not find that the Holy Ghoſt himſelf fell or was poured out on any but on the one hundred and twenty (that is, the elders), on Saul, on Cornelius and his family,

[m] Iren. adv. Hær. i. c. 2, 3. Tertull. Præſcript. l. ii. c. 39. l. v. c. 33. l. iv. c. 45.

and on the firſt great harveſt of heathen converts at Antioch in Piſidia [n]. And in the caſe of Cornelius, it is remarked by St. Luke, as a thing of great importance, and that highly deſerved their obſervation, that "the Holy "Ghoſt fell, or was poured out, upon them [o]" (a phraſeology, that, as I obſerved in the Firſt Eſſay, denotes the immediate deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt). And Peter takes notice of it, as that which was the great juſtification of his baptizing theſe firſt-fruits of the Gentiles, That "when he began to ſpeak, the Holy "Ghoſt fell on them, as it did on us (that is, "the one hundred and twenty) at the begin-"ning [p]." And in his ſpeech to the apoſtles, elders, and brethren, he takes notice of this circumſtance again, "that God gave them "(that is, Cornelius and his family) the Holy "Ghoſt, as he did unto us, and put no dif-"ference between us and them [q]."

Beſides, where the apoſtles conferred the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt on Chriſtians, "they "ſeem to have done it in a leſſer degree and "proportion:" to one believer one gift, to another, another. But the one hundred and twenty, on whom the Holy Ghoſt fell, "were "filled with it [r]," as they were ſaid to be when he fell on them the ſecond time [s]. Nor

[n] See the Firſt Eſſay.
[o] Acts x. 44, 45.
[p] Ibid. xi. 15.
[q] Ibid. xv. 8, 9.
[r] Ibid. ii. 3.
[s] Ibid. iv. 31.

in

is this expreſſion uſed of any afterwards, but ſuch as we have reaſon to think were of theſe one hundred and twenty (beſides Saul, Cornelius and his family, and the Gentiles at Antioch in Piſidia), on whom the Holy Ghoſt alſo fell, without the laying on of hands, and filled them with a more plentiful meaſure of his gifts [t].

From hence we may ſee how the "eleven "apoſtles, and Matthias, were elders," though elders were not apoſtles. St. Peter calls himſelf "an elder," ſaying to thoſe to whom he wrote [u], "The elders which are among you "I exhort, who alſo am an elder." So does John [v]. And I am the more confirmed in this notion of an elder, becauſe, whilſt Peter and John ſtyle themſelves elders, Paul never ſtyles himſelf ſo; but, as in contradiſtinction to the reſt of the apoſtles, ſpeaks of himſelf "as of "one born out of due time [w];" having never ſeen our Lord till after his aſcenſion. Nay, he is ſo far from taking the ſtyle of an elder, that he ſeems carefully to avoid it, and only calls himſelf "the aged [x]," where he was giving himſelf the greateſt weight and credit. I think "Paul the aged," πρεσβύτης, the true reading and rendering, and not πρεσβευτὴς, the ambaſſador; a reading, which is not only

[t] See the Firſt Eſſay.
[u] 1 Pet. v. 1.
[v] 2 Ep. 1. 3 Ep. 1.
[w] 1 Cor. xv. 8.
[x] Philem. 9.

entirely without the authority of any copy to ſupport it, but, I think, contrary to the context; where Paul, laying aſide all authority, as an apoſtle or an ambaſſador, applies himſelf to move Philemon by ſuch conſiderations as might engage the tender paſſions of his mind: ſuch as "Paul the priſoner of Jeſus "Chriſt" could uſe to "Philemon, his dearly "beloved and fellow-labourer[y]; whom tho' "he might have been bold to enjoin, yet "chooſes for love's ſake to beſeech, being "ſuch an one as Paul the aged, and now alſo "the priſoner of Jeſus Chriſt, for his ſon "Oneſimus, begot in his bonds[z]." Theſe elders having ſuch endowments and advantages above other Chriſtians, the firſt miniſters of the church were generally of them; the firſt deacons were, in all probability, choſen out of them, ſince they were appointed preſently after Chriſt's aſcenſion, and were then ſaid to be "full of the Holy Ghoſt[a];" a phraſe, which, as I have obſerved before, ſignifies thoſe who had a plentiful effuſion of the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, by the Holy Ghoſt's falling on them, without the laying on of hands, and therefore muſt ſignify ſome of the one hundred and twenty, or of the apoſtles company, in this text, on whom the Holy

[y] Ver. 1. [z] Ver. 9, 10.
[a] Acts vi. 3.

Ghoſt

Ghoſt ſeems to have fallen twice before this time [b]. Out of theſe it is likely the firſt prophets and teachers were taken, and the great propagators of chriſtianity, next to the apoſtles. Thus Philip, one of the ſeven, went to Samaria, and preached the word. And he was an Evangeliſt alſo [c]. And the church of Jeruſalem "ſent forth Barnabas" (another of the apoſtles company, and who was alſo a prophet, and a teacher, before he was an apoſtle [d], that he ſhould go as far as Antioch [e]. Judas and Silas are ſaid to be "chief men "among the brethren (ἄνδρες ἡγούμενοι [f],) probably, as being of the one hundred and twenty. They were alſo prophets, and "exhorted the "brethren with many words, and confirmed "them [g]." It is of ſome of theſe one hundred and twenty, perhaps, that St. James ſpeaks, when he orders the "ſick to ſend for the elders of the "church, and to pray over them, and anoint "them with oil in the name of the Lord;" aſſuring them, that the elders "prayer of "faith ſhould heal them [h]." This is the moſt probable, if St. James wrote his epiſtle out of Paleſtine, and wrote it to the Jews of the twelve tribes in Judæa, as well as to the Jews of the twelve tribes ſcattered abroad (as ſeems

[b] Acts ii. 3. iv. 31.
[c] Ibid. xxi. 8.
[d] Ibid. xiii. 1.
[e] Ibid. xi. 22.
[f] Ibid. xv. 22.
[g] Ver. 32.
[h] James v. 14, 15.

to be intimated by chap. i. ver. 18. and by ſome paſſages in the fourth and fifth chapters, as Dr. Whitby obſerves in his preface to this epiſtle); ſince then, in all probability, by the "elders of the church," he might point chiefly at the elders of the church of Jeruſalem: though to be ſure this direction referred to elders every where elſe where they might happen to be, or even to other elders, who, by way of analogy to theſe firſt elders, were called elders afterwards, if they had the prayer of faith.

And though, after the churches multiplied, others than theſe were called elders; yet they, being ſuch as were generally of the firſt-fruits of the apoſtles converſion in the places where they fixed them, and being perſons of the greateſt knowledge, experience, and gravity among them, were called elders in ſome analogy to the one hundred and twenty, who were firſt, and moſt properly, called by that name. And I am of opinion, that theſe firſt-fruits of the apoſtles converſion had every where a greater meaſure of the more excellent gifts of the Holy Ghoſt imparted to them, through the laying on of the apoſtles hands, than others, in analogy to the ſtill higher communications that came immediately on the apoſtles and their company, the devout Gentiles at Cæſarea, and the idolatrous Gentiles at Antioch in Piſidia, who were in the moſt

moſt proper and high ſenſe the firſt-fruits of the Chriſtian church. A readineſs to believe the goſpel was the higheſt proof of an honeſt, worthy, and well-diſpoſed mind. No wonder then, if they ſhould have more choice gifts conferred on them, and in a higher degree, than others, who were more backward to receive it, and conſequently not ſo well diſpoſed. And if ſuch a proportion and analogy was obſerved by God between the firſt-fruits of the whole Chriſtian church and the firſt-fruits of particular countries and churches, it was but correſpondent to other proportions and analogies, that offer themſelves to thoſe that read the hiſtory of the firſt propagation of the Chriſtian religion with due care and attention. And I am very much inclined to think, that theſe firſt-fruits of countries and churches having more choice gifts, or in a greater degree, than others, was one reaſon why theſe firſt-fruits (ἀπαρχαὶ) were ſo highly honoured in the apoſtolic and immediately ſucceeding times, as well as their earlier converſion: perhaps the greater of the two. It is probable, that theſe firſt-fruits generally had the gift of teaching, which, by the rank it is always placed in among the gifts of the Spirit, ſeems to be the fourth; namely, after that of apoſtles, prophets of the higheſt rank, and evangeliſts, and before all the reſt. It is very probable, on theſe accounts, that it was

was ſome of theſe firſt-fruits that Paul and Barnabas declared to be elders in every church in their firſt apoſtolic journey. Timothy, being the firſt-fruits of a ſecond apoſtolic journey, Paul would have to go forth with him; though perhaps prophecy of ſome of the prophets concurred to induce Paul to take him with him as an evangeliſt. And in this ſenſe perhaps it is that Paul ſays to the elders of the church of Epheſus, that the Holy Ghoſt had made them overſeers or biſhops of that flock. Perhaps they were the twelve diſciples of John Baptiſt, who were the firſt-fruits of Epheſus, and had the gifts that fitted them to be biſhops, to feed the church, and take heed to the flock. And Clement ſays moſt expreſſly to this purpoſe, in his epiſtle, ſpeaking of the apoſtles[1], "They "therefore, preaching the word thro' divers "countries and cities, ordained there the firſt-"fruits of ſuch as believed, having made proof "and trial of them by the Spirit, to be bi-"ſhops" (which with Clement is always the ſame with elders or preſbyters, as any one muſt ſee if they read the epiſtle, or, if they can doubt of it, muſt be fully convinced by the notes of the learned Mr. Burton upon it) "and deacons over ſuch as ſhould afterwards "believe." I cannot tell whether Clement does not afterwards intend to tell us that the

[1] § 42.

apoſtles

apoſtles left a liſt of ſuch perſons behind them as ſhould ſucceed, when the others that they appointed died. The place is difficult and uncertain. The words are ἢ μεταξὺ ἐπινομὴν δεδώκασιν [k]. I would refer my reader to Mr. Burton's notes upon it. However, this ſenſe is one that ſome of the critics give it, and which it may well bear. Uſher tranſlates it, "Ordinem præſcriptum:" and Hammond, "Seriem ſucceſſionis, catalogum." The place being difficult, I will tranſcribe the whole paſſage, and leave the conſtruction to the reader: Καὶ οἱ ἀπόςολοι ἡμῶν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τῦ Κυρίυ ἡμῶν Ιησῦ Χριςῦ, ὅτι ἔρις ἔςαι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς· διὰ ταύτην ὖν τὴν αἰτίαν, πρόγνωσιν εἰληφότες τελείαν, κατέςησαν τὺς προειρημένυς· καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπινομὴν δεδώκασιν, ὅπως ἐὰν κοιμηθῶσιν, διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες τὴν λειτυργίαν αὐτῶν. Mr. Dodwell ſays, that the uſage of ordaining the firſt-fruits or earlieſt converts to the miniſtry continued to the time of Hadrian; after which, he adds, "not "*ordo*, not the time of perſons being converts, "but the merit was conſidered [l]."

Where the elders of the firſt ſort failed, λο do doubt, but theſe were fixed, and "preſided "in the aſſemblies of chriſtians," directing and managing the public worſhip, where there were extraordinary gifts of the Spirit (as the

[k] § 44. [l] Dodw. Diſſ. on Iren. Diſſ. II. § xvii.

firſt

firſt ſort of elders had done before) as well as afterwards, when thoſe gifts ceaſed. And theſe were called προϊσάμενοι ἐν Κυρίῳ[m], and the οἱ καλῶς προεσῶτες πρεσβύτεροι, "the elders that "rule (or preſide) well:" eſpecially, if they had the gift of the Spirit, that qualified them for ruling (or preſiding), as the elders in the apoſtles time ſeem to have had[n]. St Paul adds, that "the elders that rule (or preſide) "well, ſhould be counted worthy of double "honour (or ſtipend) eſpecially they who la- "bour in the word and doctrine:" which ſeems to imply, that all elders ruled, or preſided; though all did not rule (or preſide) or teach well. So likewiſe St. Peter bids the elders "feed" (that is, teach) "the flock, tak- "ing the overſight thereof" (ruling, or preſiding) "not by conſtraint" (as a thing of courſe, and as what was expected from their ſtanding in years, or chriſtianity) "not "for filthy lucre" (or the ſtipend that attended) "but of a ready mind." This diſtinction of teaching and ruling elders ſeems to have laſted down to the days of Cyprian, where one may trace it plainly in theſe words of his, "Cum preſbyteris doctoribus docto- "rem audientium conſtituimus[o]." If there had not been in his time two ſorts of elders, one ſort of which was teaching elders, he

[m] 1 Theſſ. v. 12.
[n] See the Firſt Eſſay.
[o] Ep. xxix.

would

would never have added "doctoribus" to "preſbyteris." This is alſo very agreeable to what Tertullian ſays afterwards, deſcribing the worſhip of the Chriſtians: "Coimus in "cœtum (id eſt, eccleſiam) ut ad Deum, "quaſi manu facta precationibus orantes—— "ibidem etiam exhortationes, caſtigationes, & "cenſuræ divinæ—— Præſident probati qui- "que ſeniores [p]." And theſe he calls elſe- where "præſidentes [q]:" "Euchariſtice ſacra- "mentum, & tempore victus, & omnibus "mandatum eſt a Domino, etiam antelucanis "cœtibus: nec ab aliorum manu quam præ- "ſidentium ſumimus [r]."

And perhaps theſe are "the elders that St. "Paul left Titus in Crete to ordain." Paul directs Titus [s] to ordain ſuch elders in every city "as have faithful children, not accuſed "of riot or cruelty;" or, as he ſays to Timothy of a biſhop (who was to be an elder), "one that ruleth well his own houſe, having "his children in ſubjection with gravity [t];" which ſhews plainly that the elders were men ſomewhat advanced in years, who had children of ſuch an age as to be capable of being orderly or riotous. This is the more probable, becauſe Timothy not being an elder in any of theſe ſenſes, St. Paul ſeems to excuſe his lay-

[p] Apol. c. 39.
[q] Tert. de Cor. Mil.
[r] Brokeſby, p. 122. vol. I.
[s] Chap. i. 6.
[t] 1 Tim. iii. 4.

ing

ing his hands on him, to impart gifts for the office of an evangeliſt, from prophecy that directed it [u]; and alſo to enjoin ſo particularly that "no man ſhould deſpiſe his youth [w];" and to caution the Corinthians againſt it [x]; though ordinarily a novice in chriſtianity, or one newly converted to chriſtianity, was not even to be appointed a biſhop, and therefore one would imagine much leſs an evangeliſt, which was an higher office in the church [y]. And this perhaps too is the reaſon why Paul inſiſts ſo much on Timothy's "rebuking and "reproving with gentleneſs, gravity, autho-"rity, and (particularly with) purity." Timothy was a very young man, and but juſt converted, when Paul would have him go forth with him as an evangeliſt [z], and preſently after made uſe of him in converting the Theſſalonians [a]; if he did not make uſe of him in that work immediately in Galatia, Phrygia, Myſia, and the other cities of Macedonia, before he came to Theſſalonica, as it is highly probable he did. And for this reaſon it is that, after Paul directs Timothy, in the place I quoted before [b], "not to re-"buke an elder, but intreat him as a father; "the younger men as brethren; the elder

[u] 1 Tim. iii. 14.
[w] Ver. 12.
[x] 1 Cor. xvi. 11.
[y] Chap. iii. ver. 6.
[z] Acts xvi. 3.
[a] Ibid. xvii. 1. 1 Theſſ. i. 1.
[b] 1 Tim. v. 1.

"women

"women as mothers, and the younger wo-
"men as ſiſters," that he adds, "with all
"purity:" becauſe Timothy, being a young man, was to take particular care "to flee
"youthful luſts [c]."

If this be the true deſcription of elders and apoſtles, it will naturally follow who were "the brethren:" all that believed, who were not elders or apoſtles; or, if you pleaſe, all that believed, who had not ſeen Chriſt while he was upon earth, and had not the Holy Ghoſt alſo poured out upon them; that is, communicated without the laying on of hands. Thus thoſe five hundred are called "brethren" by St. Paul [d], "of whom Chriſt had been
"ſeen at once, after he was riſen from the
"dead, the greater part of whom are fallen
"aſleep;" the Holy Ghoſt not having fallen upon them: as to be ſure all thoſe alſo muſt, who were converted to chriſtianity after Chriſt's death and reſurrection, though the Holy Ghoſt fell down on them; which was the caſe of Saul, of Cornelius and his family, and of the great number of idolatrous Gentiles that were firſt converted to chriſtianity at Antioch in Piſidia [e]. All theſe, who had not ſeen Chriſt, and had not alſo had the Holy Ghoſt immediately fallen down upon

[c] 2 Tim. i. 22. [d] 1 Cor. xv. 6.
[e] See the Firſt Eſſay.

them, were firſt called "believers," being diſtinguiſhed from the other Jews by nothing but believing in Chriſt [f]; and then "diſci-"ples [g];" and, when they encreaſed to a multitude, "brethren [h]." After this, the proſelytes of the gate in the church of Antioch, who at firſt called themſelves "chriſtians [i]," but had at laſt the other names allowed them, and particularly that of "brethren," as I ſhall obſerve more fully in the Fourth Eſſay. But whatever new name theſe or any of the Jewiſh believers might take or receive, yet it was without loſing their former appellations; for though they were generally and for the moſt part called "brethren," yet are they called "believers" and "diſciples" afterwards on many occaſions [k], and all or ſome of them "chriſtians" once [l].

And as apoſtles, elders, and brethren, comprehended the whole church of Jeruſalem, all that were not apoſtles or elders in the ſenſe I have explained them came under the appellation of "brethren;" whatever acquaintance they might have had with our Saviour, or whatever gifts were conferred on them by

[f] Acts v. 32.
[g] Acts vi. 1. ii. 7. ix. 1. x. 19, 25, 26. xiv. 20.
[h] Ibid. vi. 3. ix. 30. xii. 17. xv. 1, 23, 36, 40. xvii. 6, 10, 14. xviii. 18, 27.
[i] Ibid. xi. 24.
[k] Ibid. x. 19, 25, 26. xiv. 20. xx. 1, 7. xxi. 4, 16.
[l] 1 Pet. iv. 16.

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the immediate deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, if both theſe did not concur, they were ſtill no more than brethren. Nor did the miniſtry they might perform in the church take them out of the rank of brethren, and give them the rank of an elder, whatever the miniſtry was, whether it was of prophet, evangeliſt, teacher, biſhop, or government. The diviſion of the church into apoſtles, elders, and brethren, was a diviſion that neceſſarily flowed from the nature of things; and other diviſions or diſtinctions were not ſo much regarded, and could be conſidered the leſs, becauſe, I ſuppoſe, it may be made more than probable, that there was not one member in the church of Jeruſalem who had not ſome gift of the Spirit, which he publicly exerciſed for the ſervice of that church, as occaſion offered.

In this account of apoſtles, elders, and brethren, it is viſible, how very ſmall a proportion in number the two firſt bear to the laſt. So that it is no wonder, if, towards the later times of the apoſtles, "brethren" came to ſignify the ſame thing with "believers," whether they were apoſtles, elders, or brethren ſtrictly ſo called. Whence the apoſtles direct, "Let brotherly love continue[m]." And Peter ſays to the elders, as well as the reſt, that they ſhould be "loving to the brethren[n]," ſo is the reading in the margin; and that they

[m] Heb. xiii. 1. [n] 1 Pet. iii. 8.

ſhould "love the brotherhood[o]." And Peter addreſſes himſelf to them all thus, "Where-"fore, brethren[p]."

It was to theſe apoſtles, elders, and brethren, at Jeruſalem, that the meſſage was ſent from the church of Antioch, on "cer-"tain falſe brethren coming thither," with a pretended authority from theſe apoſtles, elders, and brethren, at Jeruſalem, ſaying, "that "they muſt be circumciſed[q]."

Whereupon Paul and Barnabas having had much diſputation with them, without ſilencing them; or, perhaps, entirely ſatisfying the church of Antioch; it was agreed and determined (for which alſo there was a revelation[r]) to ſend up Paul, Barnabas, and others, to the church of Jeruſalem about this queſtion: not to determine it by their authority, as apoſtles; for then Paul and Barnabas might have done it, who were acknowledged and owned as apoſtles in that church; but firſt to know, whether theſe perſons had the authority from the apoſtles, elders, and brethren at Jeruſalem, which they pretended. This appears from the anſwer, "Foraſmuch as we have "heard that certain men which went from "us, have troubled you with words, ſubvert-"ing your ſouls; ſaying, ye muſt be circum-

[o] 1 Pet. ii. 17. [p] 2 Pet. i. 10.
[q] Acts xv. 24. [r] Gal. ii. 2. Acts xv. 2.

"ciſed,

"cised, and keep the law, to whom we gave "no such commandment[s]." For the Holy Ghost having given a full decision against this opinion, in the case of Cornelius, on whom the Holy Ghost fell in uncircumcision, I suppose these false brethren found there was no way for them to avoid that decision, and get credit at Antioch, for the imposing circumcision, but by pretending an authority from the apostles, elders, and brethren, at Jerusalem; as if a new revelation made to these apostles, and received by that church, had given a new turn to this matter. That there were many who pretended to revelations in the apostolick times, is evident from several passages in the epistles[t]. Perhaps these very men are the pretenders to revelation which St. John refers to[u], by which pretences they might have deceived the faithful, "if they "had not had an unction from the Holy One, "and had not known all things[w]."

And I believe these men's alledging that this was a new revelation made to the apostles, and pretending to bring it from the church at Jerusalem, was, together with the revelation that was actually made at Antioch, to go up to Jerusalem, the chief, if not

[s] Acts xv. 24.

[t] Particularly, 1 Thess. v. 20, 21. 1 Tim. iv. 1. 2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 John iv. 1—4, 6.

[u] 1 John ii. 19. [w] Ver. 20.

the only reaſon of the church of Antioch's ſending to the church of Jeruſalem; it being neceſſary for the peace and ſafety of the church of Antioch, to know the truth of this fact; namely, whether the church of Jeruſalem was from ſome new revelation come to think that the devout Gentiles converted to chriſtianity were to be circumciſed; and whether they had ſent theſe men with ſuch a meſſage to the church of Antioch. Accordingly the apoſtles, elders, and brethren at Jeruſalem, meet on this occaſion. When they were met, ſome of the ſame leaven in the church of Jeruſalem with thoſe pretended meſſengers riſe up to ſupport the ſame ſide of the queſtion. Whereupon a debate enſues; and after much diſputation, and James's ſumming up the debate, and forming the queſtion, they ſend an anſwer, to let them know that they did not ſend theſe meſſengers; and that, inſtead of having had any new revelation, they adhered to the deciſion which the Holy Ghoſt had made in the caſe of Cornelius. This anſwer they ſend, but by meſſengers of their own, to explain and enforce it; and who being prophets were very capable of exhorting thoſe to whom they were ſent, to comply with it, and adhere to it. If the church of Antioch had ſent for an authoritative deciſion, they would have ſent to one apoſtle: the inſpiration of one being as authoritative as

of

of a thouſand. Where do we read of ſending to more than one prophet of the Lord, upon any matter, under the Old Teſtament? Indeed, we read of a great number of falſe prophets being aſſembled, to give ſome countenance to a lye [x]. But, if the church at Antioch had wanted an authoritative determination never ſo much, they would never ſure have ſent to any more than the twelve apoſtles. Whereas they ſent to the apoſtles, elders, and brethren. Indeed, "the apoſtles "and elders" are the only perſons mentioned as ſent to [y]. But it is plain it was underſtood to be to the brethren too; from the brethren, or the "whole multitude," meeting together, and from the anſwer being drawn up in their name. It was uſual to attribute that to the apoſtles, who preſided in all debates and tranſactions in the church, where they were preſent, that was done by the whole aſſembly: as a Sheriff or Mayor is ſaid to return members to Parliament, he being the officer of the aſſembly, though others return, or join in the return, with him. The inſtance, Acts vi. is full to this purpoſe. And St. Luke probably mentions the elders here, as ſent to as well as the apoſtles, becauſe they uſed to preſide in the abſence of the apoſtles.

And if we could ſuppoſe that an authoritative anſwer was to have been ſent from the

[x] 1 Kings xxii. 6, 22. [y] Ver. 2.

whole church; yet we cannot ſuppoſe they would have debated what that anſwer ſhould be: but that one of them, under inſpiration, as the mouth of the reſt, would have delivered the mind and will of God; ſaying, "Thus "ſaith the Lord:" or, "Thus ſaid the "Lord[z]:" or, "This is the mind of Chriſt:" "Theſe things ſaith he that is holy and true; or "the Amen, the faithful and true witneſs, the "beginning of the creation of God[a]:" or, "We have the mind of Chriſt[b]:" or, "Thus "ſaith the Spirit[c]:" or, ſome of the other forms of ſpeech, uſed by the apoſtles on other like occaſions. Whereas their letter runs thus: "That it ſeemed good" (that is, reaſonable) "unto them," (they do not ſay, that it ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt and to them (as they do afterwards to a particular purpoſe, and for a different reaſon) "being "aſſembled" (that is, debating) "with one "accord," (that is, being unanimouſly of opinion from the debate). And to make it plain that they deſigned no authoritative determination, James declares againſt any ſuch; or againſt making any new law, or order. For his ſentence was, "not to trouble the Gen"tiles[d]," (that is, not to lay any new injunction on them, as thoſe had gone about to do,

[z] Acts xx. 35.
[a] Rev. ii. 14.
[b] 1 Cor. ii. 16.
[c] 1 Tim. iv. 1.
[d] Ver. 19.

who had gone from them to the church of Antioch, "troubling them[e]," ἀλλὰ ἐπιστεῖλαι αὐτοῖς, "but to write to them" (ſo we render it; it had, perhaps, been better to have rendered it, "to write a letter to them") "that it "ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt" (in the caſe of Cornelius, by falling immediately on him, and thoſe that were with him), and (it therefore did) "to them" (the words "for it ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, and "to us," naturally carry in them an inference which the aſſembly made from ſomething the Holy Ghoſt had done), "to lay no greater "burthen upon them, than thoſe neceſſary "things;" which they themſelves, therefore, muſt agree, had been laid on them before: "That ye abſtain, &c. From which things "if ye keep yourſelves" (διατηροῦντες, in the preſent tenſe, ſhewing it, at that time, to be a law), as you yourſelves know you are already obliged to do, "ye ſhall do well. Fare ye "well." This is not the ſtyle of a canon. That muſt have been, as St. Paul ſays in another caſe: "And if any man comply not "with this our commandment, let him be "Anathema Maranatha[f]:" or, "If any one "obey not our word by this epiſtle, note him, "and have no company with him[g]."

[e] Ver. 24. [f] 1 Cor. xvi. 22.
[g] 2 Theſſ. v. 14.

This was the letter they wrote. And this they ſend by choſen meſſengers, who were to ſpeak to them more fully by word of mouth. Indeed, the words our tranſlators have uſed concerning this letter ſeem very ſtrong[h]; "and "as they (Paul and Barnabas) went through "the cities, they delivered them the decrees "for to keep that were ordained of the apoſ- "tles and elders which were at Jeruſalem." But τὰ δόγμαϛα τὰ κεκριμένα, which we tranſlate "the decrees ordained," will bear a verſion that carries much leſs of an air of power and authority along with it; and may be rendered "the opinions which were agreed "by," or "the unanimous judgement of, the "apoſtles and elders at Jeruſalem." Or it may be rather, "the adjudged laws by the "apoſtles and elders at Jeruſalem." The ſenſe "and meaning of which is, "the judgement "or opinion of the apoſtles and elders about "theſe laws;" namely, of Moſes, relating to the proſelytes of the gate. This rendering would be more ſuitable to a letter, or epiſtle, that conveyed this decree; and to their ſending "Judas and Silas" (with Paul and Barnabas) to enforce it; who were "to tell them "the ſame things more fully by mouth;" and being "prophets to exhort them" to comply with this advice. Whereas there had been

[h] Acts xvi. 4.

no

no need to have ſent a letter and meſſengers, if it had been a decree in the ſtrict and proper ſenſe of the word. But our tranſlators ſeem to have had the idea of a council framing a canon always before their eyes, whilſt they tranſlated theſe two chapters; and therefore make James ſay [i], "Wherefore my ſentence "is;" ſuppoſing him, as Preſident of this council, to pronounce the decree. Whereas he does but ſum up the debate in his ſpeech, adding proper arguments of his own; and then adds, διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω, which might have been better rendered, "Wherefore my opini- "on is."

So that this decree was an unanimous anſwer to an enquiry about a matter of fact from the church of Antioch: and was at the ſame time an unanimous advice, formed upon a debate, carrying its own reaſons and evidence along with it, to all thoſe to whom the letter was addreſſed; and to be more fully explained and evinced by the meſſengers who were ſent with it. And, indeed, as we have no inſtance of any abſolute decree, or injunction, in the New Teſtament, from any apoſtle or apoſtles, but from the illumination they had received, or from immediate revelation, and ſpeaking from one or the other as the ancient prophets

[i] Acts xv. 19.

do,

ESSAY III.

ON

The Time when PAUL and BARNABAS became, and were known to be, APOSTLES.

HAVING conſidered the hiſtory of St. Paul with ſome care and attention, and particularly in relation to the order of time and place; it appears very plainly to me, from taking ſeveral parts of it together, that he did not appear to be an apoſtle to any part of the chriſtian church, till he was declared to be ſeparated to that office in the church of Antioch[1]; and that he did not even commence an apoſtle, or receive his commiſſion from Chriſt as ſuch, till a very little before he came thither; namely, at Jeruſalem, the ſecond time of his being there, after his converſion to the faith of Chriſt, about the latter end of the year 43.

[1] Acts xiii. 12.

Before

do, from the Lord, and in his name; and as it would be otherwiſe ſetting them up as kings in Chriſt's kingdom, or lords, having dominion over our faith, inſtead of his ſervants of the churches: ſo it muſt have been peculiarly improper in that ſtate of things, from the gifts of the Spirit that abounded ſo much in thoſe churches where the decrees were ſent. For they were churches where Paul and Barnabas had been, and had, no doubt, imparted the Holy Ghoſt. So, that theſe decrees cannot be ſuppoſed to be any more than the advice of ſpiritual men, appealing to thoſe who were ſpiritual, and deſiring them to judge of what they ſaid, as St. Paul does on another occaſion[k]. If this was the caſe, then I am ſure, thoſe who would have a power of making canons, or decrees, (that ſhall bind chriſtians) inherent in the church, muſt have ſome other authority for it than this decree. For if ſpiritual men here do no more than adviſe ſpiritual men about a known duty, from the evidence brought for it; and appeal back to their judgement upon that evidence; rational men (as the pretenſions of Proteſtants go no higher) can do no more with rational men, by virtue of this precedent. Nay, and as far as this goes, when advice is to be given, it muſt not be by the clergy in excluſion of, or in an over-pro-

[k] 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

portion

portion to, the laity; but by the laity in a great over-proportion to the clergy. But this will appear much clearer, if the reader will give himſelf the trouble to peruſe the Fourth Eſſay; where the matter of this decree will be conſidered, and to whom it was addreſſed.

much like that which St. Matthew mentions at Chriſt's transfiguration, "when his "face is ſaid to ſhine as the ſun, and his "raiment was white as the light;" but rather like the bright cloud that is then mentioned to have overſhadowed the three apoſtles, from which a voice iſſued; which was diſtinct from the brightneſs of our Saviour's face and garment: as appears yet more plainly in Luke[r]. For this glory, that ſhone in the road to Damaſcus, is ſpoken of; not as ſurrounding Chriſt, but as a light from heaven ſurrounding Paul and his companions[s]. From whence (that is, from the cloud) in all probability alſo the voice came, ſaying, "Saul, Saul, why perſe-"cuteſt thou me?" as the voice likewiſe did at Chriſt's transfiguration, and perhaps at his baptiſm[t].

And it is the leſs probable that Chriſt perſonally appeared at that time, ſince Saul did not know him; which moſt probably he would have done, if Chriſt had perſonally appeared to him, from the marks of crucifixion, which it is moſt likely his body carried about it: ſince he did not only appear with them to his diſciples after his reſurrection[u]; but to St. John, after his aſcenſion. For St. John ſays, he ſaw him, "as the lamb ſlain[w]," that

[r] Chap. ix. 28.—36. [s] Acts ix. 3. xxii. 6. xxvi. 13.
[t] Matt. iii. 17. [u] John xx. 25, 27.
[w] Revel. v. 6.

is, as Chriſt ſlain; who went under the character of a lamb, and whom, the ſame apoſtle tells us in his goſpel, John Baptiſt introduced to the world, by ſaying, "Behold the lamb of "God, which taketh away the ſins of the "world[x]." Now it is plain, Saul did not know Chriſt, nor whoſe voice it was that ſpake to him; ſince he aſks, "Lord, who art "thou[y]?" And even that queſtion he ſeems to aſk, becauſe he was ſenſible, as a learned Jew, well acquainted with the notion of the Schecinah, or theſe bright and luminous appearances, that this muſt be ſome divine manifeſtation, though he knew not precitely what manifeſtation it was.

But, after all this, if we can ſuppoſe that Chriſt made any perſonal appearance at that time, yet it is not likely that Saul ſaw him; ſince Luke never ſays that Saul did (but only the light from heaven), either where Luke tells the ſtory himſelf[z], or where he introduces Paul as telling it[a]: when yet, in all thoſe places, it is particularly related, that "Saul heard the Lord[b];" who, as it is moſt likely, as I obſerved before, ſpoke to him from the cloud, or heavenly glory. And ſo likewiſe Luke ſays[c], that the "men who

[x] John i. 29.
[y] Acts ix. 5.
[z] Ibid. chap. ix.
[a] Ibid. chap. xxii. or xxvi.
[b] Ibid. ix. 4. xxii. 7. xxvi. 14.
[c] Ibid. ix. 7.

"were with him ſtood ſpeechleſs, hearing a "voice" (either not ſo diſtinctly as to underſtand it, or elſe not underſtanding the Hebrew language, in which it was ſpoken [d]; in which ſenſe Paul ſays [e] they heard not the voice, and in which ſenſe ἀκούει is taken [f], but indiſtinct and confuſed ſound, or in a language they did not underſtand); but "ſeeing no "man, though they ſaw the light or the "glory [g];" a plain proof that there was no perſon there to be ſeen; which ſeems to me to be the very reaſon why St. Luke ſays [h], Paul's companions, though they heard a voice, "ſaw no man."

And it is yet the leſs likely that Saul ſaw Chriſt; ſince, in all thoſe places where this ſtory is told, Saul ſeems, the very moment he ſaw the light, to have been ſtruck blind by it, and in that inſtant to have fallen to the ground [i], and to have continued blind for three days [k].

And though Ananias ſays, that it was "the "Lord Jeſus that appeared to him in the "way;" and though Barnabas ſays, that Saul "had ſeen the Lord in the way [l]," yet that is not to be underſtood of Chriſt's perſon, but of his glory; which is the only thing

[d] Acts xxvi. 14.
[e] Ibid. xxii. 9.
[f] See 1 Cor. xiv. 2.
[g] Acts xxii. 9.
[h] Ibid. ix. 7.
[i] Ibid. xxii. 11.
[k] Ibid. viii. 9.
[l] Ibid. ix. 17, 27.

that Saul is very particularly mentioned to have ſeen, and under the deſcription of a bright light. Thus "the nobles ſaw God "the God of Iſrael, in the mount, ſeeing his "glory [m];" though "they ſaw no manner of "ſimilitude there [n]." So that, on the whole, Saul cannot be ſuppoſed to have ſeen the Lord. And yet, ſeeing the Lord was eſſential to an apoſtle, in the nature of his office; he being to teſtify, as an eye and ear witneſs, that Chriſt was riſen [o]. And agreeable thereto St. Paul ſays [p], "Am not I an apoſtle? have "not I ſeen the Lord?" "And laſt of all "(he ſays), he (that is, Chriſt) was ſeen of "me, as of one born out of due time [q]."

And though Saul heard the Lord, yet the Lord revealed nothing to him at that time; but "that he ſhould go to Damaſcus; where "it ſhould be told him what he ſhould do [r];" or, as he himſelf is reported to have related it [s], "where it ſhall be told thee of all "things which ſhall be appointed for thee to "do," that is, of as much as was neceſſary for him to hear from Ananias at that time. For what Ananias ſaid to him appears to be very ſhort and general [t], and carries nothing in it that can be ſuppoſed to conſtitute him

[m] Exod. xxiv. 10. 12.
[n] Deut. iv. 12.
[o] See the Second Eſſay.
[p] 1 Cor. ix. 1.
[q] Chap. xv. 8, 9.
[r] Acts ix. 6.
[s] Ibid. xxii. 10.
[t] Ibid. ix. 17. xxii. 14, 15, 16.

an apoſtle. It was indeed revealed to Ananias, that "Saul ſhould bear Chriſt's name "to the Gentiles," that is, ſome time or other; and he tells Saul, that God had choſen him, in order to his receiving great viſions and diſcoveries of God's will [u], and particularly that "he ſhould ſee that juſt-one, and hear the "voice of his mouth." And if Ananias related to him, that Chriſt had ſaid, that he (Saul) "ſhould bear Chriſt's name to the "Gentiles" (which Luke does not ſay that Ananias did), yet this could not make him an apoſtle: nor indeed any thing elſe (as his caſe was circumſtanced) but a revelation of the goſpel he was to preach, and a miſſion of him to preach it. Now we do not find that Ananias revealed any doctrine to him, much leſs the goſpel which he was to preach to the Gentiles: nay, we are ſure Ananias did not reveal it to him; ſince he declares, he received it not of man, nor from any of the apoſtles; much leſs from Ananias, a diſciple: but by the (immediate) "revelation of Jeſus "Chriſt [v]:" and declares [w], that "he was not "an apoſtle of men;" not ſent by Peter, or any of the apoſtles; as Timothy, Titus, and others were by him; who were "apoſtles" or meſſengers of him and the churches,

[u] Acts xxii. 14.
[v] 1 Gal. xi. 12, 17.
[w] Gal. i. 1.

(ἀπόστολον

(ἀπόστολον ἐκκλησιῶν [x]), and (ἀπόστολος ὑμῶν [y]): nor "by man" (ἀπ' ἀνθρώπου); not by the miniſtry of any man, as Matthias was; nor conſequently by the miniſtry of Ananias.

Nay farther, if he had been made an apoſtle by Ananias, he had been inferior to Matthias; who, though he was in ſome ſenſe conſtituted an apoſtle by men, yet had eleven apoſtles amongſt thoſe who, in ſome ſort, conſtituted him one: whereas, if St. Paul had been made an apoſtle by Ananias, he had been made an apoſtle by one that was no more than a diſciple [z]. But St. Paul, as he adds [a], was made an apoſtle "by Jeſus Chriſt," (that is,) immediately, or perſonally, as the other eleven apoſtles were: without the inſtrumentality of any man (for he was "in "nothing one whit behind the chiefeſt apo- "ſtles"); and "by God the Father, who raiſed "him from the dead." And the Holy Ghoſt ſays [b], "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for "the work whereunto I have called them," that is, whereunto I have already called them (meaning the time of the preceding viſion he had of Chriſt in the temple); not whereunto I only now publicly call them by the miniſtry of the prophets; as I hope to ſhew more fully afterwards. And ſo Ananias tells

[x] 2 Cor. viii. 23.
[y] Philip. ii. 25.
[z] Acts ix. 10.
[a] 1 Gal. xi. 12.
[b] Acts xiii. 2.

him, "The God of our fathers has choſen "thee [c]." And agreeably hereunto Paul always ſpeaks of himſelf, as receiving his apoſtleſhip from God, or Chriſt, or both [d]. Paul lays the greateſt ſtreſs on his receiving the apoſtleſhip from God, or Chriſt, or both, it being a matter eſſential to his being an apoſtle, and being at the ſame time a matter that admitted of ſome doubt; he having been a perſecuter near two years after Chriſt's death; and being was it objected to him by his adverſaries, that he was only an apoſtle of man, or by men; as may be plainly collected from ſeveral paſſages of his epiſtle to the Galatians.

However, though Saul could not be ſaid to be an apoſtle, on any thing that came within the compaſs of this tranſaction: yet on ſeeing this glory, in the road to Damaſcus; and on receiving theſe notifications from Ananias, in that city; and being filled with the Holy Ghoſt; he preaches there, and in Arabia, and then again at Damaſcus, and afterwards goes to Jeruſalem, three years after his converſion: where at firſt the apoſtles and brethren were ſo far from receiving him as ſuch, that "they "would not believe him to be a diſciple [e]." Is

[c] Acts xxii. 14.

[d] 1 Rom. iii. 5. 1 Cor. i. 1. 2 Cor. i. 1. Eph. i. 1. Col. i. 1. 1 Tim. i. 1.

[e] Acts ix. 26.

it

it poſſible to imagine him an apoſtle, and yet to be ſo little known to the reſt of the apoſtles as not to be thought a diſciple by them? From Jeruſalem he goes to Cæſarea, thence to Tarſus in Cilicia, and other parts of Syria, and returns to Tarſus, but preaches only to the Hebrew or Grecian Jews. The ſcripture is not only ſilent about his preaching to any others; but I hope to ſhew, by plain inferences from thence, that he as yet preached to no others; though perhaps he might preach to the proſelytes of the gate, after the year 41; having (at leaſt about that time) a plain deciſion in the caſe of Cornelius to warrant him for going ſo far. And it ſeems to be intimated that he did preach to them when he went with Barnabas from Tarſus to Antioch[f], which was in the year 43. But I ſhall endeavour to make it appear, that he did not turn to the Gentiles, that is, the idolatrous Gentiles, till about ten years after his converſion.

So that for many years after St. Paul's converſion he ſeems to have preached to the Jews, and perhaps for ſome part of that time to the proſelytes of the gate; as a zealous perſon, newly converted and enlightened, may be ſuppoſed to have done: or, more probably, by a particular order from Jeſus Chriſt, and from being filled with the Holy Ghoſt, pro-

[f] Acts ii. 19, 27.

bably as a prophet and a teacher (as I ſhall endeavour to ſhew more fully by and by), though not yet in the character of an apoſtle; having only received the Holy Ghoſt, together with a prediction, that "God had cho-"ſen him, that he ſhould know his will, "ſhould ſee that juſt-one, and hear the voice "of his mouth;" and be a witneſs of all that he had ſeen and heard[h]: but not having as yet ſeen Chriſt, nor received the doctrine of his apoſtleſhip, nor any directions to preach to the idolatrous Gentiles (of whom alone he was the apoſtle), nor teſtifying to them, nor exerciſing any of the powers peculiar to that office. However, though he does not immediately commence the apoſtle of the Gentiles; yet it is remarkable, that he, that was to be their apoſtle, was not only born, but is converted, and firſt preaches, on Gentile ground.

It was the ſecond time, as I apprehend, when Saul went up to Jeruſalem after his converſion, about the latter end of the year 43, that he commenced an apoſtle.

I. For then it was, that Chriſt "firſt ap-"peared in perſon" to him[i], whilſt he was in the temple, "ſaying to him, &c.;" he having before this only made his glory to appear to him in the way to Damaſcus. That this

[h] Acts xvii. 18, 22. and xiv. 15.
[i] Ibid. xxii. 18.

was

was the ſecond time of his coming to Jeruſalem, after his converſion, may be ſeen by comparing Acts ix. 26. Gal. i. 18. with Acts xi. 29, 30. and xii. 25.; and will be more fully proved in the ſequel: and that falls on the latter end of the year 43 [k]. So that, for the future, I ſhall ſpeak ſometimes of his ſeeing Chriſt by the time when it happened, in order to avoid a greater circumlocution that I muſt otherwiſe uſe: and Saul's ſeeing Chriſt at this time was agreeable to Ananias's prophecy at Saul's converſion, as it is related by St. Luke to have been repreſented by St. Paul himſelf [l]; "The God of our fa-"thers has choſen thee, that thou ſhouldeſt "know" (not "haſt known") "and ſhouldeſt "ſee" (not, "haſt ſeen") "that juſt-one" (which ſhews he had not ſeen him on the road to Damaſcus), "and hear the voice of his "mouth;" that is, not ſhortly, ſaying in a voice from a heavenly cloud, as at your converſion, "Go to Damaſcus;" but fully inſtructing you in a voice from his mouth (face to face) in the peculiar buſineſs of your apoſtolic charge, acquainting you with the meſſage you are to carry, and when and to whom you are to carry it. And in this very account that St. Paul gives of himſelf to the Jews, he makes Chriſt's appearing to him in

[k] See the Abſtract. [l] Acts xxii. 14.

the

the temple, to be an accompliſhment of this prediction [m]. For he adds, "And it came to "paſs, that when I was come again to Jeru-"ſalem, even while I prayed in the temple, "I was in a trance, and ſaw him, ſaying un-"to me, &c." This, we may well be aſſured, was the firſt time Saul ſaw Chriſt, from the peculiar emphaſis he here lays upon it.

II. And as this was the firſt time of his ſeeing Chriſt, ſo this was likewiſe the time when Chriſt "commiſſioned him to go to "the Gentiles," that is, the idolatrous Gentiles; as Chriſt had in a former viſion commiſſioned Peter to go to the proſelytes of the gate.

For St. Paul ſays, that Chriſt then ſaid to him, "Make haſte and get thee quickly out "of Jeruſalem, for they will not receive thy "teſtimony concerning me." And then adds, "Depart, for I will ſend thee far hence to the "Gentiles [n];" and "delivering thee from the "Gentiles, to whom I now ſend thee; to "open their eyes, and to turn them from "darkneſs to light, and from the power of "Satan unto God [o]." Now by Gentiles here the idolatrous Gentiles muſt be meant, as appears by the phraſe of "opening their eyes, "turning them from darkneſs unto light, and "from the power of Satan unto God." Theſe

[m] Acts xxii. 18. [n] Ver. 21.
[o] Acts xxvi. 16, 18.

are

are characteriſticks of the idolatrous Gentiles, and always uſed concerning them in the Acts and Epiſtles: but I think never uſed there (if any where) of Jews or proſelytes of the gate. Beſides, Chriſt had ſent Peter to the devout Gentiles long before, in the viſion of the ſheet [p]. The men of Cyprus and Cyrene had after that converted ſeveral others, which St. Luke takes notice of [q], as a remarkable tranſaction in the hiſtory of the church, conſequent to Peter's converting Cornelius and his family. After that, Barnabas and Saul converted many others [r]. So that the command could not be to go to thoſe to whom there had been a ſpecial command to Peter to go long before, as was well known in the church; and to whom thereupon Saul, as well as others, had alſo gone before. He had ſpent a great deal of his time among thoſe proſelytes in Syria and Cilicia, countries near Judæa: but now Chriſt ſends him "far hence to the Gentiles."

And that the idolatrous Gentiles are here meant, is yet clearer by the execution of this commiſſion, as we ſhall ſee more fully by and by; Paul and Barnabas hereupon turning to the idolatrous Gentiles. They preach to Sergius Paulus an heathen at his deſire [s], and to the heathens at Antioch in Piſidia at their

[p] Acts, chap. x. and xi. [q] Ibid. xi. 19, 20.
[r] Ibid. xi. 25, 26. [s] Ibid. xiii. 7.

deſire

deſire [t] (τὰ ἔθνη); who are diſtinguiſhed from the Jews and proſelytes, to whom Paul and Barnabas ſpoke the day before; ſaying, "Ye "men of Iſrael, and ye that fear God, give "audience [u]. From thence they go to Iconium, where they convert idolatrous Gentiles [w]; and ſpeak to an aſſembly compoſed of none elſe at Lyſtra [x]. And when they return, from converting them, to the church at Antioch in Syria, they "rehearſed all that God had done "with them, and how he had opened a door "of faith to the Gentiles [y]." Nothing can be plainer, than that by Gentiles here idolatrous Gentiles are meant; ſince the door of faith had been opened to the proſelyted Gentiles long before, by Peter and others, in thoſe places of the Acts I juſt now quoted, about the year 41, and ſo on to the time of this commiſſion.

And indeed, Gentiles are ſet in oppoſition to proſelytes of the gate [z]: and in other texts of the Acts, as well as in theſe places which I have juſt now quoted, ſignifies idolatrous Gentiles; unleſs there is ſomething in the text or context that particularly reſtrains the meaning of the word to the proſelytes of the gate; and of which there are not a great many inſtances. Nor can it be ſuppoſed, that Gentiles in ſcripture generally ſignify any

[t] Acts xiii. 42.
[u] Ver. 15. See the Abſtract.
[w] See the Abſtract.
[x] Acts xiv. 9—19.
[y] Ibid. xix; 27.
[z] 1 Pet. ii. 12.

others

others than idolatrous Gentiles; conſidering the characters that are generally given of the Gentiles, and the oppoſite characters that are given of the proſelytes of the gate. The Gentiles are deſcribed, as "being carried "away or led after dumb idols [a], in dark-"neſs [b]" (which the proſelyted Gentiles, who had the knowledge of the law, could not be ſaid to be); "without God, without hope, "under the power of the wicked one, and to "work all manner of uncleanneſs with gree-"dineſs [c]." Whereas the proſelytes of the gate are ſaid to be "of clean hands, and a "pure heart [d];" and "the Gentiles on whom "God's name is called [e];" and "devout men; "fearing and worſhiping God; working "righteouſneſs; and, religious proſelytes [f]."

2. That Paul is now commiſſioned to go to the idolatrous Gentiles, may appear from the phraſe uſed Acts xiii. 2. and a paſſage Acts xv. 38, which may help us to explain that phraſe. In the former place the Spirit ſays "Separate me Barnabas and Saul to the work "(εἰς τὸ ἔργον) to which I have called them." This plainly ſhew it was a peculiar buſineſs, in which they had not been engaged hitherto. True, ſay ſome: they were to go and preach

[a] 1 Cor. xii. 2. 1 Theſſ. i. 9. [b] Acts xxvi. 18.
[c] Eph. ii. 2, 12. iv. 17, 19.
[d] Pſal. xxiv. 4. [e] Amos ix. 11.
[f] Acts x. 2. xiii. 26. xvi. 14. xviii. 7. xiii. 43.

the

the goſpel farther than they had yet. Neither of them had been hitherto any farther than Syria and Cilicia, ſay they: now they were to go to Cyprus, to Pamphylia, Piſidia, and Lycaonia; the three laſt being provinces of the Leſſer Aſia. But it plainly appears, that the work to which Saul and Barnabas were ſent did not begin, in Saul's opinion, in Cyprus or Pamphylia; for he would not take Mark in the ſecond apoſtolical journey he made, becauſe he had "departed "from them, from Pamphylia, and went not "with them to the work" (εἰς τὸ ἔργον [g]); which I think can only be thus explained, "That "they had not preached to any aſſembly of "idolatrous Gentiles, nor publicly and ex-"plicitly offered their commiſſion to preach "to them, till they came to Antioch, a town "of Piſidia, the province beyond Pamphylia;" where they preſently after began this work, and on the immediate view and diſlike of which Mark ſeems to have left them. This obſervation points out to us very plainly, that the work to which Saul and Barnabas was ſeparated, and to which Mark would not go, was the preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles; that was then immediately to begin at Antioch in Piſidia, probably by the ſame direction that would not ſuffer Paul to preach in Aſia or Bithynia [h].

[g] Acts xv. 38. [h] Ibid. xvi. 6, 7.

Now

Now if this appears upon the whole to have been the firſt time of Saul's being ſent to the idolatrous Gentiles, it muſt be the time of his commencing an apoſtle. For he was only the apoſtle of the Gentiles, as I have endeavoured to prove in the Second Eſſay.

3. Thus I hope I have made it appear, that at this time Saul was firſt ordered to depart to the Gentiles; and I think it is more than probable that he at this time alſo "re-"ceived immediately from Chriſt the reve-"lation of the goſpel, that he was forthwith "to preach to them:" or, in the phraſeology of ſcripture, that he had "the word of wiſ-"dom committed to him."

For firſt he tells the Galatians in the moſt expreſs terms, that "he received not the "goſpel he preached from man; nor was he "taught it, but by the revelation of Jeſus "Chriſt[i]." And there is no other account, that ſeems to bid ſo fair to be the account of the preciſe time when Chriſt revealed it to him, as this; ſince he is here firſt ſent by Chriſt to the Gentiles. Now as he could never be ſent, without having the meſſage that he was to carry delivered to him, either ſome time before, or at that very time, or ſome time after; ſo it does not ſeem congru-ous to the Divine Wiſdom, to have delivered it

[i] Gal. 1. 11, 12.

before

before it was to be carried; or to ſend Paul then, and not deliver him the errand he was to go upon till ſome time after. And therefore we may fully conclude, not only from the wiſdom of God, but from the beauty and propriety that appear in all the Divine tranſactions of which any particular accounts are given us, that Chriſt acquainted Saul with the meſſage he was to carry to the Gentiles, at the very time that Chriſt told him that he (Chriſt) would then ſend him (Saul) to them. And thus "the word went forth out of Sion" (not from the road to Damaſcus) not only to the Jews, but alſo the Gentiles; according to the prediction in Pſalm xi. 3. "Many peo-
"ple ſhall go and ſay, Come ye, and let us go
"up to the mountain of the Lord, to the houſe
"of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us
"of his ways, and we will walk in his paths;
"for out of Sion ſhall go forth the law, and
"the word of the Lord from Jeruſalem."

2. I am the more confirmed in my opinion, that this was the preciſe time when Chriſt immediately revealed the goſpel to Saul, that he was to preach to the Gentiles; from his acquainting the Corinthians, that "he had a great revelation made to him" at a time that agrees with the very time I am ſpeaking of; and from ſaying ſeveral things of it, which ſeem to point out that this

this was the very matter of the revelation that was then made to him [k].

As to the agreement of time, St. Paul tells them, that it was about fourteen years ago [l]. Now he wrote his ſecond epiſtle about the year 58; it being written (ſays Dr. Whitby, about, I think ſomething above) a year after the firſt, which was written anno 57 [m]. Now from 58 it was about fourteen years back to the latter end of 43, which was the ſecond time of Saul's being at Jeruſalem, after his converſion [n].

The things that St. Paul relates "of that "revelation [o]," and which "point it out to "be that of the goſpel he was to preach to "the Gentiles," are chiefly theſe:

1. That it was a viſion and revelation [p]. This agrees well with the account that is given us of his "ſeeing Chriſt," in accompliſhment of Ananias's prediction, "That he "ſhould ſee that juſt-one, and likewiſe hear "him:" which he did, "ſaying unto him, "Depart, for I will ſend thee far hence to the "Gentiles." And it agrees well with the ſuppoſition of a full diſcovery of the meſſage, he (Saul) was to carry; as well as of

[k] 2 Cor. xii. 1. [l] Ver. 2.

[m] I refer the reader to Dr. Whitby's Preface to the firſt and ſecond epiſtle of St. Paul to that church.

[n] See the Abſtract. [o] 2 Cor. chap. xii.

[p] Ver. 1.

the perſons to whom he was to carry it: eſpecially ſince it is mentioned, as an accompliſhment of Ananias's prediction, "that he "ſhould hear the voice of his mouth;" that is, have a full diſcovery of his good pleaſure concerning him: as I have obſerved before. And it is remarkable, that this word "reve-"lation" is the very term that St. Paul makes uſe of, when he ſpeaks of the diſcovery of the goſpel by Chriſt to him [q].

2dly. It was an "high viſion and revela-"tion." He ſpeaks of them as the greateſt of all his revelations: ſomething whereof he might "boaſt and glory;" and which, if it did not ſet him above, would at leaſt among other things ſhew that "he was not a whit "behind, the chiefeſt of the apoſtles [r]." To be ſure, it was a revelation of far greater conſequence than the higheſt of Peter's, which was that of the ſheet [s]. And it was a revelation that was abundantly full and clear; and that had like, "through the abundance "of it, to have exalted him above meaſure;" and that made it neceſſary that ſomething very afflictive and mortifying ſhould accompany it, in order to abate the pride it might have otherwiſe occaſioned. Now what viſion, or revelation, are all theſe high characters ſo likely to agree in, as the viſion of Chriſt, that

[q] Gal. i. 12. Eph. iii. 3. Coloſſ. i. 26.
[r] 2 Cor. xi. 5. xii. 1. [s] Acts x. 2.

qualified

qualified him to be an apoſtle; and the revelation of the grace of the goſpel, and thoſe unſearchable riches of Chriſt, that were then diſpenſed to him; and which he was then told, that he, as an apoſtle, ſhould diſpenſe forthwith to the Gentiles? or, in other words of his, that "myſtery which had been hid in "the deep counſel of God from ages, but was "now to be made manifeſt:" which, as St. Paul tells the Coloſſians, was "Chriſt" (or the goſpel of Chriſt) "in you" (Gentiles), "the "hope of glory[t]." A revelation, to which all theſe characters agree, muſt have been a revelation of ſomething very uſeful and important; ſince God does not uſe to reveal things of little or no conſequence. And what revelation can be imagined of ſo great ſervice and importance to mankind, as a revelation that the glad tidings of ſalvation were to be conveyed to the whole world; with a declaration, that they were free from the weak, beggarly, and ſlaviſh elements of the Jewiſh law?

St. Paul ſpeaks of his goſpel, to the Epheſians, in a ſtrain very ſuitable to this, when he tells them in the third chapter of that epiſtle, "For this cauſe, I Paul, the priſoner of "Jeſus Chriſt for you Gentiles; if ye have "heard of the diſpenſation of the grace of

[t] Coloſſ. i. 27.

" God, which is given me to you-ward: how that
" by revelation" (the ſame word that is uſed 2 Cor. xii. 1.) " he made known unto me the
" myſtery (as I wrote afore in few words,
" whereby when ye read, ye may under-
" ſtand my knowledge in the myſtery of
" Chriſt) which in other ages was not made
" known unto the ſons of men, as it is now
" revealed unto his holy apoſtles and prophets
" by the Spirit; that the Gentiles ſhould be
" fellow heirs, and of the ſame body, and par-
" takers of his promiſe in Chriſt by the goſ-
" pel: Whereof I was made a miniſter, ac-
" cording to the grace of God given unto me,
" by the effectual working of his power.
" Unto me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all
" ſaints, is this grace given, that I ſhould
" preach among the Gentiles the unſearch-
" able riches of Chriſt; and to make all men
" ſee what is the fellowſhip of the myſtery,
" which from the beginning of the world
" had been hid in God, who hath created all
" things in Jeſus Chriſt: To the intent that
" now unto the principalities and powers in
" heavenly places, might be known by the
" church the manifold wiſdom of God, ac-
" cording to the eternal purpoſe which he
" purpoſed in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord."

From all this it appears, that St. Paul ſpeaks of this as the higheſt and greateſt of all his revelations. Unleſs therefore a viſion

and revelation can be ſuppoſed of greater importance than the ſeeing Chriſt, and receiving from him the revelation of the goſpel of the Gentiles, and the qualifying him, and ordering him then immediately to impart it; we muſt ſuppoſe that this was that very revelation; the ſelf ſame, that he mentions to have received Acts xxii. 17. when he fell into a trance in the temple.

I am far from denying that Paul might, in this revelation, have had ſome viſion, view, or diſcovery, of the glory of heaven; ſince he ſays, "he was caught up into paradiſe and to "the third heaven; and heard unſpeakable "words, which it is not lawful (or poſſible) "to utter[u]." But I take it, that that revelation was not made for St. Paul's ſpeculation; but to encourage him againſt all the difficulties he was to encounter, in making the other revelations (then made to him) known to the Gentile world; an account of which difficulties he gives us, 2 Cor. xi. from ver. 23, to the end of the chapter. Juſt as God was pleaſed to ſhew his glory to Moſes, to ſupport him under the great diſcouragements he met with, in conducting the children of Iſrael through the wilderneſs, from their idolatry of the golden calf; and the wrath that waxed hot againſt them for it, as may be ſeen in Exodus[w].

[u] 2 Cor. xii. 1, 4. [w] Chapters xxxii. xxxiii. xxxiv.

St. Paul adds in the account that he gives the Corinthians of this viſion and revelation, "That, leſt he ſhould have been exalted "above meaſure by the abundance of the "revelation, he had a thorn in the fleſh," (that the adverſaries, "the falſe apoſtles, the "emiſſaries or the meſſenger of Satan,") might have ſomething wherewith "to buffet him." For this I take, with Dr. Whitby, to be the true ſenſe of ἄγγελος Σατᾶν ἵνα μὲ κολαφίζῃ. The more full meaning of which I apprehend to be this: When St. Paul found, that by the viſion of Chriſt, and the revelation of this myſtery of the goſpel, which was to be then immediately publiſhed to the Gentiles, by him, as their apoſtle; and that by the ſight he had of the heavenly glory, to encourage him to encounter the difficulties of this work; he was not only raiſed to an higher pitch of divine favour than Moſes (who had the higheſt revelations under the law, with whom our apoſtle, who had his head full of Jewiſh knowledge, ſeems often to compare, and to whom he refers himſelf and his miniſtrations, eſpecially in this ſecond epiſtle to the Corinthians,) but even beyond the chiefeſt of the apoſtles, to whom alſo (eſpecially Peter) St. Luke often takes care to give him the preference in the Acts of the Apoſtles, as he himſelf does in ſome of his Epiſtles; as I have ſhewn in the Second Eſſay. (Even thoſe three who were

were Chriſt's witneſſes from the baptiſm of John, of all his preaching, diſcourſes, and miracles, and of his transfiguration, as well as his aſcenſion, and the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt.) Leſt, I ſay, he ſhould have been too much exalted by an high ſenſe of theſe tranſcendent favours and diſcoveries, he was ſtruck with a palſy: perhaps from a ſtronger impreſſion of the heavenly glory on his nerves than human nature, or at leaſt his conſtitution, could bear (as we read of ſome of the ancient prophets being ſick and faint after their viſions [x]; and as the brightneſs of the light that appeared to him on the road to Damaſcus ſtruck him blind). This, it may be, rendered him of a ſtammering ſpeech, and very likely of ſuch convulſive and diſtorted motion of the muſcles of his face, as made his appearance very ridiculous and contemptible; and made him then fear that he ſhould not ſucceed in his meſſage to the Gentiles, who affected eloquence, elocution, and outward appearance (juſt as Moſes was afraid he ſhould not ſucceed with Pharaoh for the ſame reaſon [y]); eſpecially ſince it would afterwards give his adverſaries, the apoſtles, meſſengers, or emiſſaries of Satan, a great occaſion of rendering him mean and contemptible to his hearers. He therefore beſought the Lord thrice, "that it might depart from him." But after he

[x] Dan. viii. 17. [y] Exod. iv. 10.

was aſſured, that "Chriſt's ſtrength ſhould "be made perfect in his weakneſs, and that "his grace ſhould be ſufficient for him, he "glories in (theſe) his (bodily) infirmities, "that the power of Chriſt might reſt (or ap-"pear to reſt) upon him." He therefore takes pleaſure in (theſe bodily) "infirmities, "and in the reproaches that the adverſaries "might caſt on him, on the account of theſe "infirmities: becauſe when he was weak, "(namely, on the account of theſe bodily in-"firmities,) then was he ſtrong in Chriſt, and "in the power of his might." For he then plainly ſaw that it muſt neceſſarily appear, that the ſucceſs which ſhould attend his miniſtrations, and which did afterwards attend them, could not ariſe "from the enticing "words of man's wiſdom, but from the de-"monſtration of the Spirit, and of power[z];" or, as he expreſſes it in another place, "that "the excellency of the power was of God, and "not of him[a];" or, as he yet ſpeaks in a more exalted ſtrain[b], "that the weapons of his "warfare were not carnal, but mighty, through "God; to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, "caſting down imaginations, and every high "thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the know-"ledge of God, and bringing into captivity "every thought to the obedience of Chriſt,"

[z] 1 Cor. ii. 4. [a] 2 Cor. iv. 7.
[b] Ibid. x. 4.

This

This interpretation of this difficult place ſeems to me to agree ſo well with every paſſage of this place itſelf, and with my preſent purpoſe, that I hope my reader will forgive me for having dwelt ſo long upon it; and the rather, ſince I hope too that I have added ſomething to what Dr. Whitby has in general ſo well obſerved upon it.

3. I am ſtill the more inclined to think that our bleſſed Lord gave Saul the meſſage he was to carry to the Gentiles at the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion, becauſe "there were none of the "apoſtles preſent at Jeruſalem at that time;" as I have endeavoured to prove in the Second Eſſay. Now it ſeems to me moſt likely that our bleſſed Lord ſhould give Saul the meſſage, or goſpel, that he was to publiſh to the Gentiles, when there were not any of the apoſtles at Jeruſalem, that ſo there might be no pretence to ſay that he was an apoſtle of a lower order; but that it might appear that he had his goſpel from Chriſt alone, and that he was not behind any of the apoſtles. St. Paul ſpeaks fully to this purpoſe, when he informs the Galatians, that he learnt "nothing from "any of the apoſtles; but had the revelation "of his goſpel from Chriſt alone[c]."

4. As I think it moſt likely, that he had his apoſtolical miſſion from Chriſt at Jeruſa-

[c] Gal. i. 12, 20. ii. 6.

lem

lem at a time when there was no apoſtle there; ſo I likewiſe think it moſt likely, that the notification of this miſſion ſhould be immediately made in the church of Antioch; a church which was collected, and which met on Gentile ground, where there was no apoſtle; but which was full of proſelytes of the gate, as appears from the Acts [d]: and that he and Barnabas ſhould be ſent by ſuch a church to the work, as far as a church could ſend them (that is, that they ſhould be recommended to the grace of God by their prayers, as we ſhall ſee more fully by and by), as the apoſtles and apoſtolick men were ſent to convert the Jews and Samaritans, and proſelytes of the gate, from the church of Jeruſalem [e]. Now this agrees exactly with my hypotheſis; for if he was ſent by Chriſt at the time of his viſion in the temple, then to be ſure that was the miſſion which was notified to the church of Antioch [f].

IV. But what muſt put it out of doubt that the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion was the time when he received the meſſage from Chriſt, is, that now he firſt carries it.

For, 1. as it cannot be ſuppoſed that Chriſt would reveal the goſpel of the Gentiles to Saul long before he intended it ſhould be pub-

[d] Acts xi. 26.
[e] Ibid. viii. 14. xi. 22.
[f] Ibid. xiii. 1.

liſhed

liſhed; ſo it cannot be ſuppoſed that Saul ſhould have it revealed to him any conſiderable time before he actually publiſhed it; ſince a revelation of ſuch importance muſt be ſuppoſed to be made for the benefit of the idolatrous Gentiles, and not for Saul's ſpeculation and entertainment: and yet Saul muſt have hid this glorious talent a great while in a napkin, if this revelation was made to him even at the firſt time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion; which was anno 38 (that is, about ſeven or eight years before he preached to the idolatrous Gentiles, for whoſe ſake alone it was revealed to him); much more, if it was made at his converſion, which was three years before that, namely, anno 35.

2. It appears plainly, that, as ſoon as Saul had received Chriſt's commands, at the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion, he then actually carried this meſſage to the idolatrous Gentiles; at leaſt as ſoon as Chriſt's commands to him were notified to the church, by the mouth of the prophets in the church of Antioch: for he then preſently ſails to Cyprus, and there converts a ſingle heathen, the proconſul of the iſland, the firſt fruits of the idolatrous Gentiles[g]. Soon after he comes to Antioch in Piſidia, where the aſſembly ſeems to be compoſed chiefly indeed

[g] Acts xiii. 7—13.

of

of Jews and religious proſelytes, or proſelytes of the gate[h]; but, as it ſeems, of ſome Gentiles or idolatrous Gentiles too, by their being diſtinguiſhed from the Jews and religious proſelytes[i]. And the next ſabbath day, on the perverſeneſs of the Jews, he and Barnabas "waxing bold," declare, that though it was neceſſary that the word ſhould be firſt preached to "you (Jews)," yet, ſince you put it from you, "and judge yourſelves unworthy of everlaſting life, lo, we turn to the "Gentiles[k];" about the beginning of the year 46. And it ought to be obſerved here, by the way, that St. Luke on this occaſion ſays, that on the great perverſeneſs of the Jews, "Paul "and Barnabas waxed bold, and turned to the "Gentiles." If Chriſt had been publicly preached before to a number of idolatrous Gentiles, where is the force of St. Luke's remark, that they "waxed bold?" Though indeed, as Chriſt had not been preached to the idolatrous Gentiles before, there is a great beauty in it: for, conſidering the ſtrong prejudices of the whole body of chriſtians then againſt the idolatrous Gentiles, it required a very high degree of courage to turn to them, even on this amazing perverſeneſs of the Jews. Paul uſes a like expreſſion concerning

[h] Acts xiii. 43.
[i] Ver. 42 compared with ver. 43. See the Abſtract.
[k] Acts xiii. 46.

Eſaias's

Eſaias's clear prophecy about the calling of the Jews[l]. But "Eſaias is very bold, and "ſaith, I was found of them that ſought me "not. I was made manifeſt unto them that "aſked not for me. But unto Iſrael he ſaith, "All day long have I ſtretched forth my "hands unto a diſobedient and gainſaying "people." I cannot but obſerve here, as I go along, that God ordered it ſo in his providence, that, as the firſt great harveſt of devout Gentiles ſhould be made at Antioch in Syria, ſo the firſt great harveſt of idolatrous Gentiles ſhould be made at Antioch in Piſidia. From Antioch in Piſidia they go to Iconium, where they ſpeak in the ſynagogue, as they had done at Antioch in Piſidia. But the firſt time they ſpake to a number of heathens only, which was at Lyſtra, the town whither they fled from Iconium: they there ſay, "that in the times that were hitherto paſt, "God ſuffered all nations to walk in their "own ways, ſending no meſſenger to reſtrain "them;" but now ſends us, "to preach to you "to turn from theſe vanities (heathen deities) "to the living God[m]." This carries very much the air of this being the firſt time of the goſpel's being preached to an unmixed aſſembly of heathens. I am ſure, carrying that in our mind will add force and beauty to St. Paul's manner of expreſſing himſelf on this occaſion.

[l] Rom. x. 20, 21. [m] Acts xiv. 15, 16.

occaſion. Compare this ſpeech of his to that he made, in his ſecond apoſtolical journey, at Athens; and it ſtill confirms one in this thought. That was alſo an unmixed aſſembly of heathens; his ſpeech there is much of the ſame caſt with this here. But the goſpel had been then preached by Paul to the heathens in ſeveral parts of the world; and therefore, after ſaying to them, that "God winked "at the times of former ignorance," he adds with great propriety, "but commandeth all "men every where to repent[n]." After St. Paul and Barnabas left Lyſtra, they go through parts of the Leſſer Aſia, converting idolatrous Gentiles; then return to Antioch in Syria, from whence they "had been recommended "to the grace of God, for the work which "they had fulfilled. And—rehearſed all "that God had done with them, and how he "had opened the door of faith to the Gen-"tiles[o]" (which ſhews plainly that the door of faith had never been opened to the idolatrous Gentiles before). After which, St. Paul and Barnabas go out on a ſecond progreſs among the Gentiles: but, on their differing about Mark, they part; Barnabas going to Cyprus, Paul through all the Leſſer Aſia; then to Macedonia, and Greece, and at laſt in another journey to Rome, and other parts of Italy, and perhaps to Spain.

[n] Acts xvii. 30. [o] Ibid. xiv. 26, 27.

3. It

3. It makes very much for my purpoſe, that no epiſtle of St. Paul was written till after his firſt peregrination to convert the idolatrous Gentiles, which was after the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem; his firſt epiſtle being written in the year 52. If he was an apoſtle from his converſion, how comes it that he wrote no epiſtle to the Gentiles till after the time of his viſion in the temple?

4. What adds great ſtrength to all the proofs I have already given that Saul did not preach the goſpel before the time of that viſion, is, that he did not communicate his goſpel, that is, the goſpel which he preached to the Gentiles, to any of the apoſtles, till "fourteen years after his firſt being at Jeru-"ſalem[p]," that is, till about the year 49; which was the third time of his being at Jeruſalem. He communicated it then by revelation, or ſpecial orders from Chriſt, to go up thither for that purpoſe as well as others; and then only to James, and Cephas, and John[q], whom he calls "them that were of "reputation[r]," and who, he ſays, "ſeemed to "be ſomewhat[s]," and "who ſeemed to be "pillars[t]," and to them "but privately; leſt "by any means he ſhould run, or had run, in

[p] Gal. ii. 1, 2.
[q] Ver. 9.
[r] Ver. 2.
[s] Ver. 6.
[t] Ver. 9.

"vain.

"vain[u]." Such would have been the oppoſition and fury of the Jewiſh chriſtians themſelves againſt his goſpel, from their known bigotry to the law. This is not at all ſurprizing, if St. Paul did not preach to the idolatrous Gentiles till after his being the ſecond time at Jeruſalem: ſince then the third time of his being there, in the year 49 (or, as he expreſſes it "fourteen years" after his converſion, which was in the year 35), was the next time of his being there, after his preaching to, or becoming the apoſtle of, the Gentiles. But his ſilence about this matter to all the apoſtles, till the third time of his being at Jeruſalem, can never be accounted for, if he had preached the goſpel to the idolatrous Gentiles before his being there the ſecond time; no more than his not preaching it to the idolatrous Gentiles before his ſecond time of being there can be accounted for, if it had been revealed to him before that time.

5. As St. Paul did not communicate the goſpel he preached to the idolatrous Gentiles, to any of the apoſtles at Jeruſalem till the third time of his being there, and then only to three of them privately; ſo he does not ſeem to have communicated it to the elders, and the church of the believing Jews at Jeruſalem, till the fifth time of his being there,

[u] Ver. 2.

about

about the year 58, as ſeems to be pretty plainly intimated in the Acts[u]; for then St. Luke ſays, that "Paul went unto James, all "the elders being preſent, and declared par- "ticularly what things God had wrought "among the Gentiles by his miniſtiry. And "when they heard it, they glorified the "Lord:" and then give him advice how to clear himſelf to the multitude, from a calumny that ſeems to have been raiſed againſt him (and, as it ſhould ſeem, on the very firſt news that had reached the church of Jeruſalem of his teaching the idolatrous Gentiles), namely, that "he taught the Jews that were among "the Gentiles to forſake Moſes[w];" being ſatisfied themſelves with the account he gave of the goſpel he preached to the Gentiles; and withal intimating, that the Jewiſh converts perhaps might not be diſſatisfied with that account neither, when they came to hear of his ſucceſs among the idolatrous Gentiles, no more than they were with the decree about the proſelytes of the gate. But that, as the thing that provoked them was the report, that he taught the "Jews among the Gentiles to "forſake Moſes," it would be neceſſary for him to ſhew them that that was falſe; and that he was ſo far from teaching the Jews that were among the Gentiles any ſuch thing, that "he himſelf alſo walked orderly, and

[u] Chap. xxi. 17, 18, 19. [w] Ver. 21.

"kept the law:" which he might do, by vowing the vow of a Nazarite. Thus this myſtery revealed to Saul was made known by him to the Jewiſh church but by very ſlow degrees, for very wiſe reaſons (ſome of which I have endeavoured to point out in the Preface), and agreeably to other revelations of myſteries, very obſervable in ſcripture.

Now is it likely, that Saul ſhould be an apoſtle the firſt time of his being at Jeruſalem, much leſs at his converſion three years before that, and yet that the goſpel of his apoſtleſhip ſhould not be known to the elders, and the reſt of the church at Jeruſalem, till the fifth time of his being there, namely, about the year 58, twenty years after the firſt time of his being at Jeruſalem, or twenty three years after the time of his converſion, when the contrary opinions ſuppoſe him to be an apoſtle? The reaſon of his not communicating it to the elders the fourth time of his being at Jeruſalem ſeems to have been, that he had no proper opportunity to do it during the ſhort ſtay he then made there; or, which is more likely, becauſe God did not like that it ſhould be declared ſo ſoon.

There is another incident in the account which we have of St. Paul's coming to Jeruſalem at this time, which may ſerve to ſhew us that this was the firſt time of his declaring

declaring the converſion of the idolatrous Gentiles to the church of Jeruſalem; which is this. He at this time brought "alms "with him to his nation" (or to the ſaints of his nation), as he tells Felix[x]; theſe alms he had collected with great induſtry, by writing letters, and ſending meſſengers and making journies himſelf to the ſeveral churches of Aſia, Macedonia, and Greece, from which he collected them. Some of theſe churches gave very liberally[y]; and the contributions at laſt, through his care, being ſo conſiderable, Paul would not be entruſted with them alone, but had meſſengers of theſe churches joined in the truſt; and hired ſhips, and afterwards carriages, to carry himſelf, the meſſengers, and contributors, to Jeruſalem: a thing not uſual with St. Paul, who ſometimes "wrought "with his hands, to ſupply his own neceſſi- "ties and the neceſſities of thoſe who were "with him[z]." Now it is highly probable that he laboured this collection, which he had never made among the idolatrous Gentile converts before, that ſo he might reconcile the minds of the Jewiſh believers to the account of the converſion of theſe idolatrous Gentiles, which he now deſigned to impart to the church of Jeruſalem, as news he thought proper to impart to them now,

[x] Acts xxx. 17. [y] 2 Cor. viii. 1—6.
[z] Acts xx. 34. See the Abſtract.

though he had never thought it fit to impart it to them before. If this was not the reaſon of Paul's making and carrying theſe collections to Jeruſalem now, why did not he make and carry them thither at the end of his ſecond apoſtolick journey, anno 54; ſince that was after the agreement made between the apoſtles of the circumciſion and himſelf, and Barnabas, about this matter; that agreement being made at the end of his firſt apoſtolick journey, anno 49? And on this account it is, that he is ſo ſolicitous that the alms might be well accepted of the ſaints at Jeruſalem, as we may ſee he was, by his deſiring the Romans to pray for him, "That the ſervice "which he had for Jeruſalem, or this miniſ-"try, might be accepted of the ſaints there [a]." Alms are ſeldom unwelcome; what could then make him doubt, whether theſe alms would be well accepted of the ſaints at Jeruſalem, eſpecially ſince the alms which he carried to the poor ſaints at Jeruſalem from Antioch had been received [b]? What could be the reaſon then why he ſo much feared whether theſe alms would be well accepted; but that, as they came from devout Gentiles, theſe came from the idolatrous Gentiles, converted indeed to the faith, but who did not abſtain from things offered to idols, from things ſtrangled, and from blood; and whom

[a] Rom. xv. 25. 26, 27, 28, 31. [b] Acts xi. 29, 30.

he

he was therefore afraid they would eſteem unclean, notwithſtanding their having been "ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt," as his expreſſion is [c]? From this incident therefore, and ſome particular paſſages relating to it, it is natural to conclude, that this was the time when St. Paul firſt deſigned to communicate, and actually did communicate, the news of the converſion of the idolatrous Gentiles to the church at Jeruſalem: eſpecially if, as it is plain on the one hand, that he did not carry theſe contributions before his third apoſtolick journey; ſo it ſhould appear on the other, that he carried contributions from the Gentile to the Jewiſh believers at Jeruſalem, at the end of his fourth apoſtolick journey alſo; as there is ſome probability he did [d].

If it be objected, that St. Paul is ſaid [e] "to "have declared, what miracles and wonders "God had wrought among the Gentiles, by "him and Barnabas among the Gentiles;" which was in the year 49: I anſwer, that I think it may be made to appear, that that was underſtood at that time by all the apoſtles (except three), elders, and brethren, to whom Paul and Barnabas made that relation, to refer to the proſelytes of the gate converted to chriſtianity only; and not to the idolatrous Gentiles: as I hope to prove in the Fourth Eſſay.

[c] Rom. xv. 16. [d] See the Firſt Eſſay. [e] Acts xv. 12.

Thus I imagine it will appear, that Saul was not ſent to the idolatrous Gentiles, nor preached to them, till the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem, after his converſion: but I am ſenſible this is liable to objections, which deſerve an anſwer.

I. It may be objected, that Saul preached before this time to the Jews, and even to the proſelyted Gentiles; and therefore was even an apoſtle of the Gentiles before this time. I anſwer, 1. That Saul's preaching to the Jews does not make him an apoſtle, becauſe he was the apoſtle of the Gentiles, and not of the Jews; as I have proved in the Second Eſſay. 2. That he could not be called the apoſtle of the Gentiles for preaching to the proſelytes of the Gate; 1. Becauſe the proſelytes of the gate are not the perſons deſigned by Gentiles in ſcripture, unleſs there be ſomething that ſhews particularly that they are intended. 2. Peter and others had preached to the proſelyted Gentiles before Saul; whereas he glories in it, as a ſpecial grace and favour to him, that "the myſtery of calling the Gentiles to the "fellowſhip of the goſpel was reſerved to be "revealed by him[f]." But chiefly, 3. becauſe St. Paul preached ſomething new to the idolatrous Gentiles after his viſion in the temple,

[f] Eph. iii. 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10. Gal. i. 15, 16. and in ſeveral other places which I quoted, fully to this purpoſe, in the Second Eſſay.

different

different from what he and others preached to the proſelytes of the gate before; namely, the goſpel of the Gentiles. He and others preached to the Jews the faith of Chriſt; but withal telling them, that they muſt remain Jews, and were bound by the laws of Moſes as Jews; though they were not bound by them as the people of God, or bound by them as the terms of juſtification and eternal life. St. Peter, He, and others, preached to the proſelytes of the gate the chriſtian faith; but they were ſo far from releaſing them from the obligation they were under to the law of Moſes, of abſtaining from things ſtrangled, and from blood, and from the pollutions of idols; that their decree was, that they were ſtill bound by thoſe laws. But what St. Paul preached to the idolatrous Gentiles was chriſtian faith, without the obſervance of any one of the laws of Moſes; which no man preached before him, or knew till he preached. This he calls "his goſpel[g];" "the "goſpel he preached among the Gentiles, the "unſearchable riches of Chriſt[h];" "the "myſtery of the goſpel[i];" "the fellowſhip "of the myſtery for which he was a priſo-"ner[k];" "the myſtery which had been "hid from ages, but is now made manifeſt to "his ſaints; whereof he was made the mi-

[g] Rom. xvi. 25.
[h] Eph. iii. 8, 12.
[i] Ibid. vi. 14.
[k] Ibid. iii. 1—12.

"niſter[l]." Beſides, 4. there was not only a difference between Paul's preaching before and after his being the ſecond time at Jeruſalem after his converſion, on account of the matter he preached, and the perſons he preached to; but in the manner of doing it: having only preached, taught, proved, or diſputed, before his viſion in the temple; but teſtifying and witneſſing immediately after it; that is, preaching in the peculiar manner and character of an apoſtle. But I ſhall but juſt mention this here, intending to ſpeak more fully to it preſently.

II. It may be objected, that Paul tells King Agrippa, that "as he was going to Damaſ-"cus, Chriſt bid him riſe, and ſtand on his "feet—for he would deliver him from the "Gentiles, to whom he then ſent him;" as Paul himſelf relates it[m]. I confeſs, this looks at firſt ſight as if Paul had ſaid, that as he was going to Damaſcus, Chriſt had ſent him to the Gentiles. But I think this will not appear in that view, on looking more narrowly into it. For, 1. If we conſult the hiſtory itſelf of what paſſed on the road to Damaſcus Acts ix. we ſhall not find that any words of this kind are there related to have been ſaid by Chriſt to Saul. 2. We ſhall find ſome words ſaid there by Chriſt to Saul, from whence I think we may fairly infer, that

[l] Col. i. 20, 26. See the Second Eſſay.
[m] Acts xxvi. 16.

theſe

theſe words were not ſaid at the time. The words I refer to are (on Saul's aſking, "what "Chriſt would have him to do"), ver. 6. "Ariſe," (which is the ſame with "Ariſe, and "ſtand on thy feet," Acts xxvi. 16.) "and go "into the city, and it ſhall be told thee what "thou muſt do." Theſe words referring Saul entirely to what ſhould be told him in the city, makes it highly improbable that any thing particular, eſpecially any thing ſo very particular as that he would deliver him from the people and the Gentiles, to whom he then ſent him, ſhould have been ſaid to him at that time. It ſeems much more probable, ſo high an honour as this deſigned him ſhould have been notified to him by Ananias, after his three days faſt, to whom indeed ſome intimation of this kind ſeems to have been made known, Acts xxii. 5. And Paul relates the tranſaction on the road to Damaſcus preciſely in this manner, Acts xxii. 8, 9, 10. 3. In the relation, Acts xxii. he hints that Ananias ſaid theſe words to him at Damaſcus (not Chriſt on the road thither); namely, "for I have appeared unto thee, to make thee "a miniſter and a witneſs both of theſe "things which thou haſt ſeen, and of thoſe "in the which I will appear unto thee," ver. 16. as will appear by Acts xxii. 15. 4. It appears from Acts xxii. 21. that theſe words, ver. 17. "delivering thee from the "Gentiles,

"Gentiles, unto whom I now ſend thee," were ſpoken by Chriſt to Saul at the time of the viſion in the temple; and therefore it is not at all probable they were ſpoken by Chriſt on the road to Damaſcus. I cannot but take the hiſtory, Acts ix. to be exact as far as it goes; both as it is a hiſtory, and as it is confirmed by Paul's relation, Acts xxii. And I believe Paul's relation, Acts xxii. is very critical and exact; becauſe it is very particular as to all circumſtances, and becauſe Paul well knew how little candour he muſt expect from that audience. On the other hand, I take the account Paul gives of this matter to Agrippa, Acts xxvi. to be more ſummary and complicated, becauſe he would not detain a King, and the reſt of that noble audience, by deſcending to too great a minuteneſs, and becauſe he ſeems to expect a more favourable and candid hearing than from the Jews, Acts xxii. I therefore apprehend the account, Acts xxvi. is to be explained and ſet right by Acts ix. and Acts xxii. and not thoſe two places by Acts xxvi. This laſt account ſeems to me to be putting every thing ſhortly together, without diſtinguiſhing the different times pertinent to Paul's purpoſe, that had occurred on the road, at Damaſcus, or in the temple. And it deſerves to be obſerved, that even in this account, ſummary and complicated as it is, he firſt hints ſhortly his trance

in

in the temple, in theſe words, "of thoſe "things in which I ſhall appear to thee;" that is, at the time of the trance in the temple: and ſays this in oppoſition to thoſe things "which he had ſeen;" meaning the tranſaction in the way to Damaſcus: and then farther adds, that his obedience to this command was performed, "by ſhewing firſt unto "them of Damaſcus, and Jeruſalem, and "through all the coaſt of Judæa, and then to "the Gentiles, that they ſhould repent [n]." So that I apprehend, in this ſhort narrative to King Agrippa, both the appearance of Chriſt's glory in the way to Damaſcus, and of his perſon to St. Paul at the time of his trance in the temple, and of what Ananias ſaid to him at Damaſcus, are included (though not minutely diſtinguiſhed, that not being material to his purpoſe before Agrippa); and conſequently, that this, inſtead of being any objection, may ſerve to confirm my opinion, that St. Paul never preached to the idolatrous Gentiles till after the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem, after his converſion.

III. Some perhaps may object too, that St. Paul, in the account he gives of himſelf to the Galatians [o], ſeems to give it very differently; telling them, "that when it pleaſed God, "who ſeparated him from his mother's "womb" (alluding to the pretended ſepa-

[n] Acts xxvi. 20. [o] Gal. i. 15, 16, 17.

ration

ration of his ſect of the Phariſees to a greater degree of holineſs and ſanctity), " and called " him by his grace to reveal his Son in him, " that he might preach him among the hea- " then, immediately he conferred not with " fleſh and blood, neither went he up to Jeru- " ſalem, to them which were apoſtles before " him; but went into Arabia." They may pretend, that the ſenſe of theſe words is this: That as ſoon as God revealed his Son to St. Paul, he immediately went and preached, as an apoſtle, to the Gentiles in Arabia; which has generally been the opinion of divines. But how does it appear that he preached to the Gentiles in Arabia? were there no Hebrews, or proſelytes of righteouſneſs, to preach to in a country bordering on Judæa? But however that is, it cannot be the meaning of his preaching to " the Heathen" in this place, that he immediately preached to the Gentiles, even if we ſhould by " Heathen" here underſtand the proſelyted Gentiles; much leſs if we underſtand by " the Heathen" here, the idolatrous Gentiles (which is to be ſure the ſenſe of the place), and that for this reaſon; that St. Paul was converted in 33, and conſequently, according to this opinion, muſt have preached to proſelyted Gentiles in Arabia immediately after: whereas Cornelius and his family were the firſt fruits of the proſelyted Gentiles, as St. Peter and St. James expreſſly

expreſſly declare[p]; and were converted by St. Peter[q], agreeably to our Saviour's promiſe to him, "of giving him the keys of the king-"dom of heaven[r];" Peter being then "cho-"ſen from among the apoſtles," to preach the word of the goſpel to the Gentiles, as well as by the viſion of the ſheet, the viſion of Cornelius, and the revelation of the Spirit[s]. Now St. Peter did not convert Cornelius and his family till about the year 41, ſix years after this opinion ſuppoſes St. Paul to have converted idolatrous Gentiles in Arabia. And it is taken notice of as a very remarkable occurrence in the hiſtory of the church, that after St. Peter had converted Cornelius, then others converted other proſelytes[t]; nor can it be ſuppoſed that Paul converted proſelyted Gentiles before Peter, who firſt opened the kingdom of heaven to them. And much leſs can it be ſuppoſed that St. Paul converted idolatrous Gentiles before Peter converted proſelytes of the gate.

If any can imagine that St. Paul converted the idolatrous Gentiles before St. Peter converted the proſelytes of the gate; they do not conſider the wiſe order in which God directed chriſtianity to be ſpread: firſt, by

[p] Acts xv. 7, 14. [q] Ibid. chap. x.
[r] Matt. xvi. 19.
[s] Acts x. 5, 11—21. See alſo the Abſtract.
[t] Acts xi. 10, 20, 24. See the Fourth Eſſay.

preaching

preaching it to the Jews at Jeruſalem; then of Judæa [u]; then of Samaria [w]; then to the proſelytes of the gate [x]; and laſtly, to the idolatrous Gentiles [y]; agreeable to our Saviour's prediction [z], "and ye ſhall be witneſſes unto "me, both in Jeruſalem, and in all Judæa, "and in Samaria, and to the uttermoſt parts "of the earth:" and to our Saviour's own example, who firſt taught at Jeruſalem, and in Judæa, then at Samaria, and at laſt at Galilee; and not only to publicans and ſinners, and centurions, but to a woman of Galilee. Here is a beautiful gradation, each ſtep leading to another; which thoſe who imagine St. Paul converted idolatrous Gentiles in Arabia five or ſix years before St. Peter converted the proſelytes of the gate entirely deſtroy. Beſides, as Arabia bordered on Judæa, if Paul had converted idolatrous Gentiles to chriſtianity there, the news ſoon reached the Jewiſh chriſtians at Jeruſalem; who could not then have been ſo ſurprized, as they were [a], at the news of Peter's converting the proſelytes of the gate; ſaying with aſtoniſhment, "Then hath God alſo to the "Gentiles granted repentance unto life!"

So that the ſenſe of this place cannot be, that St. Paul went to Arabia to convert the heathen; but, as I apprehend, is this: that

[u] Acts x. 36. [w] Ibid. viii. 5. Ann. 34.
[x] Ibid. x. 11. xi. 19, 20. Ann. 41.
[y] Ibid. xiii. 12, 46. Ann. 45, 46.
[z] Ibid. i. 8. [a] Ibid. xi. 18.

when

when God (who had always deſigned St. Paul for the apoſtleſhip of the Gentiles from his mother's womb) converted him to chriſtianity, he did not conſult any man, or learn any thing from any man, or go to conſult the apoſtles at Jeruſalem; but that, inſtead of going to Jeruſalem, he went and preached Chriſt immediately in Arabia, where he could then do it ſafely; Aretas the King of Arabia being then willing to protect all the chriſtians (whom Herod hated), on account of the war there was between them and Herod; to ſhew that he learnt what he preached of no man (Chriſt not having been preached there before), and to avoid building on another man's foundation; which he ſays he never cared to do [b]; but without ſaying to whom he preached; that we are left to collect from other places of ſcripture. From whence, I hope, it is by this time plain, that it was to the Jews only. And I think it is highly probable from this very place, that what St. Paul preached at his firſt converſion, and of which he ſpeaks to the Galatians [c], was not the goſpel he preached to the Gentiles; but only the ſame faith which the other apoſtles preached to the Jews; ſince he ſays [d], that all "that the churches of Judæa knew of "him was, that he preached the faith which

[b] Rom. xv. 2. 2 Cor. xii. 17.
[c] Gal. i. 15, 16, 17. [d] Ver. 23.

"he

" he once deſtroyed;" that is, the faith the other apoſtles preached to the Jews; namely, as St. Luke ſays of him, that " Jeſus is the " Son of God, or very Chriſt [e];" but not the goſpel that he by ſpecial revelation preached to the Gentiles; of which he ſeems to ſpeak in the next chapter as a diſtinct thing; when he ſays, " Then fourteen years after " I went up to Jeruſalem, and communicated " that goſpel which I preach among the Gen- " tiles [f]."

St. Paul is in this place vindicating himſelf from the aſperſion of his adverſaries; who ſaid, that he was not an apoſtle, or at leaſt that he was but an apoſtle of a ſecondary order, and had had all his knowledge and authority from ſome of the other apoſtles at Jeruſalem; as an attentive reader will eaſily perceive from the firſt, ſecond, and third chapters of this epiſtle. St. Paul vindicates himſelf from this aſperſion, 1. by aſſuming a ſtyle that ſtrongly implies the contrary [g]; 2. by aſſerting expreſſly, that he had his goſpel from none but Chriſt [h]; 3. by letting the Galatians ſee, that he could not receive any thing from any of the apoſtles the three firſt years after his converſion; having gone into Arabia (and not to Jeruſalem), and then return-

[e] Acts ix. 20, 22.
[f] Ver. 2.
[g] Ver. 1—5.
[h] Ver. 11, 12.

ed

ed to Damaſcus [i]. 4. By letting them know, that when he went to Jeruſalem the firſt time after his converſion, he ſaw but two apoſtles, and ſtaid there but fifteen days, and then went to Syria and Cilicia, and not to any of the churches of Judæa, to whom he was unknown; but to whom it was moſt likely he would have gone, if he had been ſent by thoſe apoſtles. 5. By telling them, that the third time he went up to Jeruſalem (none of the apoſtles being there the ſecond time) it was by expreſs revelation; and that he was ſo far from learning any thing from them, that he imparted to them the knowledge or the goſpel that he preached among the Gentiles, which they had no notice of before; and that he was then owned and received as the apoſtle of the Gentiles by them [k]. This I take to be the true ſenſe and intention of St. Paul in this place. But I ſee nothing here that ſhews that he was an apoſtle at his firſt converſion; or that he preached to the Gentiles in Arabia as an apoſtle ſoon after.

V. As I do not find that St. Paul had the word of wiſdom committed to him before this, or that he communicated it to the Gentiles; ſo it does not appear that he gives any inſtance before this, of his having the "word of knowledge," as I have explained it, in the Firſt Eſſay; and proved it to be-

[i] Ver. 15—17. [k] Chap. ii. 1—11.

long to the apoſtles, in the Second. But as the diſcovery that the goſpel was to be preached to the idolatrous Gentiles was one high inſtance of that word of knowledge, which was now committed to him; ſo, after this diſcovery, we find many inſtances of it in his epiſtles[1].

VI. By what I have ſaid, I think it appears plainly, that Paul did not preach to the idolatrous Gentiles before the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion; though that was the diſtinguiſhing work of his apoſtleſhip. I think it will yet make it clearer, that he did not commence an apoſtle till after that time; if it be conſidered, that he did not teſtify or exerciſe any of the powers and prerogatives common to him with the reſt of the apoſtles, or peculiar to himſelf, before that time: but that (as we have ſhewn) immediately after that time, he ſat about one peculiar part of his function; namely, preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles; ſo alſo it may be now made to appear, that immediately after that time, he likewiſe preached in the character of an apoſtle, and exerciſed the other powers and prerogatives, that were peculiar, or common, to him, with the reſt of the apoſtles.

[1] See the Second Eſſay.

1. Pro-

1. Prophets are ſaid to exhort [m]; evangeliſts are ſaid to preach [n]; others are ſaid to teach [o]; and apoſtles are ſaid to witneſs or teſtify [p]. And agreeably hereunto Saul, who was a teacher and a prophet [q], immediately after his converſion, is ſaid to "preach Chriſt in "the ſynagogues [r];" "to prove that this" (namely, Jeſus of Nazareth) "is very Chriſt [s];" "to ſpeak boldly" (I think it ſhould be rendered "publickly" or "openly)" "in the "name of the Lord Jeſus; to diſpute againſt "the (unbelieving) Grecians [t];" and "to "teach the people at Antioch [u]." But St. Paul acquaints us, that when Chriſt appeared to him, at the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion, he (Chriſt) ſaid to him, "Make haſte, and get thee quick-"ly out of Jeruſalem, for they will not re-"ceive thy teſtimony concerning me [w]." So that now firſt Saul had a "teſtimony" to bear: and though the Jews at Jeruſalem would not receive it, yet he was to carry it to the Gentiles, to whom Chriſt then ſent him [x], "to be a witneſs of the things "in which Chriſt had appeared to him."

[m] Acts xi. 23. xv. 32.
[n] Acts viii. 5. xii. 35. compared with chap. xxi. 8.
[o] Ibid. xviii. 25.
[p] See the Second Eſſay.
[q] Acts xiii. 1.
[r] Ibid. ix. 20.
[s] Ver. 22.
[t] Ver. 29.
[u] Ibid. xi. 26.
[w] Ibid. xxii. 18.
[x] Ibid. xxvi. 17.

Tyre[l], and of Agabus at Cæſarea, who foretold, that he ſhould be bound by the Jews, and delivered to the Romans[m] ("none of "thoſe things moving him"). He goes to Rome a ſecond time, and runs into the mouth of the lion, after he had been delivered out of it, when it was neceſſary to diſcharge his apoſtolical truſt. In all this, he ſhewed the greateſt firmneſs of mind. Nor could any man poſſibly want a greater degree of courage and reſolution than he, that was to be brought before Sanhedrims, Roman Governors, and the Roman Emperor or his Lieutenant (when all deſerted him[n]), to anſwer for a doctrine, which was contrary to all men; not only to the believing, but unbelieving Jews, proſelytes, judaizing and idolatrous Gentiles: yet he publiſhed it with a firmneſs and conſtancy, that was unſhaken by all the terrors of life. And though it is ſaid that he had "preached boldly at Damaſcus, "and he ſpake boldly in the name of the Lord "Jeſus at Jeruſalem[o]," which was ſeveral years before the time that I think he commenced an apoſtle; yet we are to conſider, that he was "ordained to be an apoſtle from his mo-"ther's womb[p]." That conſideration might perhaps remove this difficulty. But I think it

[l] Acts xx. 4.
[m] Ibid. xxi. 11.
[n] 2 Tim. iv. 16.
[o] Acts ix. 27. 29.
[p] Gal. i. 15.

is more material to ſay, that "boldly" ſhould there rather be rendered "publickly" or "openly:" the ſenſe, as I apprehend, being, that "he, who was certain days with the "diſciples which were at Damaſcus [q]" (namely privately), at laſt began "to preach Chriſt "in the ſynagogues [r];" and which Barnabas, when he comes to give an account of it to the apoſtles at Jeruſalem [s], ſays, was "boldly," as we tranſlate it; or, as I think it ſhould be rendered, "openly;" and that "he, who was "with the apoſtles going out and coming in [t]," that is, "living familiarly with them in pri-"vate," now begins "to ſpeak openly, in "the name of the Lord Jeſus [u]." But I do not find this boldneſs is aſcribed to any, but thoſe who were, or at leaſt were to be, apoſtles. Apollos indeed is ſaid "to have ſpoke "the word boldly [v]." But I hope I have ſhewn, in the Second Eſſay, that it ought to be rendered "publickly," and not "boldly." The firmneſs and ſteadineſs of St. Paul, under all his ſufferings for the goſpel is what he glories in himſelf. And ſo remarkable a degree as he had of it after the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion, and after which his great ſufferings began,

[q] Gal. i. 19. [r] Ver. 20.
[s] Ver. 27. [t] Ver. 28.
[u] Ver. 29. See the Second Eſſay; and L'Enfant and Bauſobre, in loc. [v] Acts xviii. 24.

ſeems to me to be a degree of it peculiar to an apoſtle.

3. Another ſign of an apoſtle, was a power of "inflicting death" or grievous "bodily "diſtempers" on obſtinate offenders. Thus Peter ſtruck Ananias and Saphira dead. And though we do not find Paul ever ſtruck any one dead, yet we find him ſometimes inflicting bodily diſtempers; the power of inflicting which, he calls "his rod," or "a rod com-"mitted to him for edification, and not for "deſtruction[w]." Now, as we do not read that Paul ever uſed this rod before the time of his ſeeing Chriſt, at the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem; ſo we immediately read of his uſing it afterwards, ſtriking Elymas the Jewiſh ſorcerer blind, when he would have blinded the Proconſul, or "per-"verted him from the right ways of the "Lord[x]." And we hear much of this rod afterwards, in both his epiſtles to the Corinthians; where he orders a bold offender to be delivered "over to Satan, for the deſtruction "of the fleſh, that the Spirit might be ſaved "in the day of the Lord[y];" and ſpeaks of "his being in a readineſs to revenge all the "diſobedience of a powerful faction" in that

[w] 1 Cor. iv. 21. 2 Cor. x. 8. xiii. 10.
[x] Acts xiii. 11. [y] 1 Cor. v. 5.

church, if they did not amend before he came again to them [z].

4. Another badge of this high office was the power of performing extraordinary cures, or of performing cures in an extraordinary manner; ſome of which, I think, St, Luke calls "ſpecial miracles [a]," or miracles peculiar to an apoſtle. And thus we ſee that, after St. Paul's being the ſecond time at Jeruſalem after his converſion, he cures the cripple at Lyſtra [b], ſends handkerchiefs from his body to perform cures at a diſtance [c], and raiſes Eutychus [d]. But it is very obſervable, that he does none of all theſe extraordinary cures before the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion; and that he begins to perform them preſently after.

5. The greateſt prerogative of all, and that which was moſt peculiar to an apoſtle, was the power of imparting the Holy Ghoſt. Now we never read of Paul's doing this before his being the ſecond time at Jeruſalem after his converſion. But after that, he immediately imparts the Holy Ghoſt to the firſt heathen converts at Antioch in Piſidia [e] (if the Holy Ghoſt did not fall on them, as on the hundred and twenty at the begining,

[z] 2 Cor. x. 6, 8, 11. xii. 20. xiii. 2—10.
[a] Acts xix. 11. [b] Ibid. xiv. 8, 11.
[c] Ibid. x. 12. [d] Ibid. xx. 9—12.
[e] Ibid. xiii. 52. Ann. 46.

without

without the laying on of hands, as I have obſerved was probable [f]. He imparts it to Timothy [g]; to the Galatians [h]; to the Theſſalonians on his firſt converting them [i]; to the Corinthians [k]; to the Epheſians [l]; and among others at Epheſus, to certain diſciples of John [m], the ſecond time of his coming there, about the latter end of the year 54.

VI. I muſt alſo add, that it is not till after St. Paul's being the ſecond time at Jeruſalem after his converſion, that we have any account of his exerciſing that ſingular power, which we have pretty plain hints of afterwards; namely, of "ſeeing what was done in the "churches under his care whilſt he was at a "diſtance," of which we have an inſtance [n]. But I ſhall not inſiſt on the inſtances themſelves, having treated more fully of them in the Second Eſſay.

VII. It ſeems highly improbable to me, that Saul ſhould have been known to be an apoſtle long before his being called ſo. Now he is never called an apoſtle till Acts xiv. 14; which was at Lyſtra, the third place at which St. Paul publickly exerciſed his apoſ-

[f] See the Firſt Eſſay.
[g] Acts xvi. 3. 2 Tim. i. 6. Ann. 50.
[h] Gal. iii. 2, 3, 5. Ann. 51. [i] 1 Theſſ. i. 5.
[k] 1 Cor. i. 5, 7. 2 Cor. i. 22. xii. 12. Ann. 52.
[l] Eph. i. 13. [m] Acts xix. 6.
[n] Coloſſ. ii. 5. 1 Cor. v. 3, 4.

tolical

tolical office, and probably in a few weeks after he firſt exerciſed it in any aſſembly whatſoever. If he had publickly acted in this character long before, it is ſingular that St Luke, ſo well acquainted with his ſtory, and ſo very careful and exact in tranſmitting it, ſhould never give it him till after his being ſeparated in the church of Antioch to the work to which the Holy Ghoſt had called him.

VIII. It ſeems yet more improbable to me, that Saul ſhould have been an apoſtle before that time, when at that very time, inſtead of being called an apoſtle, he is only called "a "prophet, and a teacher[o]." The offices of an apoſtle, a prophet, and a teacher, were too diſtinct in themſelves, and St. Luke too well acquainted with the great diſtinction there was between them, and too exact in theſe matters, to have ranked Paul among the prophets and teachers in the church of Antioch, if he had been an apoſtle at that time.

IX. It ſeems to me yet more improbable, that, if Saul had been an apoſtle at that time, he ſhould have been named the laſt of the five[p]. Mr. Pyle ſeems to think this ſo wrong, that, in his Paraphraſe, he corrects St. Luke in this particular, and puts Saul firſt, ſuppoſing him at that time to be an apoſtle. But, if St. Luke might not be thought competent to ſettle the rank between Barnabas and Saul,

[o] Acts xiii. 1. [p] Ibid.

how

how comes he to place others before Paul, as well as Barnabas? And yet St. Luke is an accurate writer in this reſpect as well as all others. I believe we ſhall never find him put Silas after Timotheus, Silas being the elder dean, and one of the leading men among the brethren; no more than Paul does in his epiſtles afterwards; which ſhews rank in chriſtianity was carefully attended to in the apoſtolick times [q]. And it is highly probable that the five mentioned in Acts xiii. 1. all of them prophets and teachers, are ranked according to their age and ſtanding in chriſtianity; which if Mr. Pyle had happened to advert to, I believe it would have ſatisfied him with the place that St. Luke aſſigns to Saul among them in the Antiochian church, and prevented him from giving Saul the precedence againſt St. Luke's hiſtory.

X. I cannot but think it is the more probable that St. Paul did not commence an apoſtle till after the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion, becauſe he is never called "Paul" till after that time; but preſently after, it is ſaid "Saul, who is "alſo called Paul [r]." Now, though it is moſt likely he had that name given him at his circumciſion by his parents, as well as Saul; Saul being the Jewiſh name, much uſed in the tribe of Benjamin, of which tribe

[q] 1 Theſſ. i. 1. 2 Theſſ. i. 1. [r] Acts xiii. 9.

Paul

Paul was; and Paul his Roman name, being born at Tarſus a Roman city; and it being no uncommon thing to give two names: yet how comes it about, that he did not uſe his Roman name till ten years after his converſion, and till ſix years after his being the firſt time at Jeruſalem; but that, as before his duty had been among the Jews, among whom Saul ſounded better than Paul, ſo now it was to be among the Gentiles, among whom Paul would ſound better than Saul? And after this, he never uſed any other. Origen was of opinion, that this was the reaſon of his uſing theſe different names at different times; as may be ſeen in his Preface to the Epiſtle to the Romans.

XI. I think it alſo very remarkable, that Barnabas is always named before Saul by Luke, St. Paul's companion, and very ſolicitous for his honour (as will appear to a careful reader of the Acts), till ſome little time after his being the ſecond time at Jeruſalem, and after his being declared to be an apoſtle in the church of Antioch. For it does not only ſtand thus, Acts xi. 30, and xiii. 2. "Separate me Barnabas and Saul;" but, ver. 1. the prophets in the church of Antioch are reckoned up in this order, 1. Barnabas, 2. Simeon, 3. Lucius, 4. Manaen, 5. Saul. If Saul had been known or declared to be an apoſtle before this time, he would probably have

have been firſt named. But, till he became an apoſtle, Barnabas was of a prior rank in the church; having been not only in the Lord before him, but in all probability one of the ſeventy, and an elder, or one of the hundred and twenty on whom the Holy Ghoſt deſcended at Pentecoſt without the intervention of hands (as I have endeavoured to prove in the Second Eſſay), which Saul was not; ſo that there was no reaſon to place Saul before Barnabas. But afterwards Luke places St. Paul generally firſt [s], and repreſents him always as the ſpeaker [t], ἡγούμενος τοῦ λόγου. Though, Barnabas being an elder as well as an apoſtle, Luke does ſometimes name him before St. Paul; even after St. Paul became an apoſtle [u]. But I think there can be no reaſon given, why St. Luke, who gives Barnabas precedence, Acts xi. 30, and xiii. 1. ſhould at any time after that give it Paul; but that Paul, who was not an apoſtle till a very little before, Acts xiii. 1. and who was not known to be an apoſtle till Acts xiii. 1. when he became one, or rather became known to be one.

XII. If it ſhould be ſuppoſed, that St. Paul was made an apoſtle at his converſion, yet how can we, upon that ſuppoſition, account for

[s] Acts xiii. 13, 43, 46. xv. 39.
[t] Ibid. xiii. 16—44. xiv. 12.
[u] Ibid. xiv. 14. xv. 12, 25.

Barnabas's

Barnabas's being made an apoſtle of the Gentiles? That he was an apoſtle of the Gentiles, I have proved in the Second Eſſay. And ſince there cannot be any time fixed on for his being declared an apoſtle, but that mentioned in chap. xiii. of the Acts, and that he (as well as Paul) is called an apoſtle preſently after, Acts xiv. 14. and never before; we muſt conclude that this was the time of his (as well as Paul's) commencing an apoſtle. Now, if he was declared the apoſtle of the Gentiles at that time, Paul muſt have been declared ſo at that time too; for they were both ordered by the Spirit to be ſeparated to the ſame work, to which they had been jointly called before; and to which they afterwards jointly went.

XIII. To confirm all that I have ſaid, it appears, that St. Paul and Barnabas were never received and owned as apoſtles, by any of the other apoſtles, till the third time of St. Paul's being at Jeruſalem, about the year 49; for then it was that "James, and Cephas, and John, and the "chief of the Jewiſh apoſtles, gave them the "right hand of fellowſhip, on perceiving the "grace that had been given them" (that is, the favour of the revelation of the goſpel he preached to the idolatrous Gentiles, and the ſucceſs that had attended it), "that he and "Barnabas ſhould go unto the heathen" (that is,

is, be the apoſtles of the Gentiles), "and they "unto the circumciſion[v]" (that is, continue the apoſtle of the Jews). How could St. Paul be an apoſtle at the firſt or ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem, and not be then known or owned as ſuch by any of the apoſtles, and only be known and owned as ſuch by the three chief apoſtles at the third time of his being there; that is, about eleven years after his being there the firſt time, and about ſix years after his being there the ſecond? No man can with any reaſon ſuppoſe it.

This ſeems to me much the ſtronger, becauſe St. Paul appeals to his being thus acknowledged as a fellow-apoſtle by the three chief apoſtles, againſt his adverſaries; who, as I obſerved before, pretended, among other things againſt him, that he was not an apoſtle; or that, if he was one, he was but a kind of an apoſtle of a ſecondary order, deriving all his knowledge and authority from Peter and the reſt of the twelve. Now can it be ſuppoſed that, when St. Paul was thus vindicating himſelf againſt theſe aſperſions, he would not have carried up his apoſtleſhip, and his being owned as an apoſtle, as high as he could? Since therefore he carries his being owned as an apoſtle no higher than the third time of his being at Jeruſalem, it cannot be

[v] Gal. ii. 9.

imagined

imagined that St. Paul was ever owned by them, or by any of the other twelve, as an apoſtle before; or that he would not have been owned before by the other twelve, if they had had a prior opportunity of owning him.

Theſe reaſons, vindicated from the exceptions that may be taken to them, convince me very fully, that St. Paul was not an apoſtle till after he ſaw Chriſt, at the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion, ann. 43; and conſequently, that he could not be an apoſtle at any time before.

If, after all, it ſhould be objected, that the time of Chriſt's appearing to Saul, on his falling into a trance in the temple, was at his firſt (and not at his ſecond) coming to Jeruſalem, after his converſion; ſince he himſelf ſeems to intimate that he had this viſion, "when he was come again to Jeruſalem[w];" and the time that he mentions of his being there before[x], was the time juſt before his converſion: I anſwer, that what St. Paul had then in view, being only to ſhew that he had this viſion at Jeruſalem at a time after his being there to get letters from the Sanhedrim againſt the chriſtians, made it unneceſſary and improper for him to ſpeak ſo minutely as to the very preciſe time when he ſaw this viſion, as to ſay whether it was the firſt or

[w] Acts xxii. 17. [x] Ver. 5.

the ſecond time of his being there after his converſion: it was altogether ſufficient to ſay, that it was at ſome time of his being there after his ſeeing the glory of Chriſt on the road from Jeruſalem to Damaſcus.

I think the hiſtory of St. Paul, ſet in this light, may account for what has been called his double ordination, though there is no juſt reaſon to call either of them ſo. In the firſt, the Holy Ghoſt, as I apprehend, fell upon him, ann. 35. On the receiving it, he preaches Chriſt to the Jews undoubtedly, that is, both Hebrew and Grecian, and perhaps to the proſelytes of the gate alſo, after the year 41; a common thing for all that could do it, to do, without any ordination whatſoever: teaching being a duty in all that had abilities and inclinations, ariſing from the very light of nature, and the great law of charity, as things ſtood in the church, before the canon of the New Teſtament was compleated and diſperſed; every one being bound in ſuch a caſe to communicate truths of the utmoſt importance to others, who could not know them but by their means. Such teaching needs a commiſſion or an ordination no more, than teaching a ſecret how to cure the plague does in a country infected with it. A man that had ſuch a ſecret would certainly communicate it, without ſtaying for any commiſſion whatſoever; unleſs he deſired to ſee nothing

nothing but death and deſolation all about him. The love of our neighbour is God's ſufficient general commiſſion in that caſe.

But St. Paul did receive particular orders to go and teach. For he is ſaid to be filled with the Holy Ghoſt at his firſt converſion [y]; and I believe all that received the Holy Ghoſt did take that as a commiſſion to exerciſe the gifts they had received, in chriſtian aſſemblies, women as well as men: how much more thoſe that were filled with it? as I believe no particular perſon is ſaid to be that was not a prophet. I do not remember that that expreſſion, when applied to any particular perſon, does ever denote any one under that degree; and is often uſed concerning Zacharias and Elizabeth [z], John Baptiſt [a], and Barnabas [b]. And that Saul was a prophet and a teacher before he was an apoſtle, we expreſſly read: "And there were certain pro-"phets and teachers in the church of Anti-"och, as Barnabas, and Simeon that was "called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and "Manaen, which had been brought up with "Herod the tetrarch, and Saul [c]." And St. Paul ſays, that when Chriſt, or the glory of Chriſt, appeared to him in the way to Damaſcus, that Chriſt ſaid to him, "he

[y] Acts ix. 17.
[z] Luke i. 42, 67.
[a] Ver. 15.
[b] Acts x. 24.
[c] Ibid. xiii. 1.

" appeared to him, to make him a miniſter
" and a witneſs, both of thoſe things which
" thou haſt ſeen, as well as of thoſe in the
" which I will appear to thee [d]."

And in this, by the way, the wiſdom of Providence deſerves our notice. For by his being firſt a prophet and a teacher of the chriſtian faith to the Jews, and afterwards to the proſelyted Gentiles, in all for about eight or nine years (in which time he was received and owned as ſuch by the Jewiſh believers), the way was prepared for his becoming an apoſtle of the Gentiles, and many of thoſe prejudices againſt him, and his office as the apoſtle of the Gentiles, were ſoftened or removed; which might otherwiſe have operated much more ſtrongly againſt him, in the minds of a people ſo bigoted to their own law, and ſo prepoſſeſſed againſt the idolatrous Gentiles, as the Jewiſh believers were.

After he had been a prophet and a teacher about eight or nine years, he is ſent " as an
" apoſtle to preach to the Gentiles" (that is, the idolatrous Gentiles), by Chriſt; from whom he had then a ſpecial commiſſion, in a viſion to himſelf, namely, the latter end of ann. 43; which he ſeems to hint to Timothy, when he tells him, that he was " appointed a
" preacher, an apoſtle, and a teacher of the
" Gentiles [e]."

[d] Acts xxvi. 16. [e] 2 Tim. i. 11.

This

This commiſſion was afterwards declared or notified to the church, by the prophets in the church of Antioch, the beginning of ann. 44; "Separate me Barnabas and Saul to the work "to which I have called them;" agreeably to the words St. Paul ſays Chriſt uſed to him, ſaying, "Depart, for I will" (namely, ſhortly at Antioch, not now) "ſend thee far "hence to the Gentiles[f]:" which notification has been ſuppoſed by ſome to be his ſecond or his apoſtolical ordination, from ſome word uſed on this occcaſion; which I will conſider preſently. And the church faſt and pray for a bleſſing on the particular work which he and Barnabas were going upon; and lay their hands on them. But, on both theſe occaſions, he received his commiſſion from Jeſus Chriſt, either by the means of Ananias, or of the Holy Ghoſt filling him with theſe gifts, to be a preacher; and to be an apoſtle, immediately and perſonally from Chriſt, at the time of the viſion in the temple; as I have proved before. And let thoſe who think an apoſtle muſt have any other ordination from men than this, namely, praying for a bleſſing (or, in other words, that he muſt have a conveyance of power from ſome other that had it), conſider whether Ananias a diſciple could ordain a preacher; and prophets, men of an inferior order, could ordain an apoſtle, who was of the higheſt order in the church?

[f] Acts xxii. 21.

What has led perſons to think that this was an ordination of Paul and Barnabas is, that the terms are here uſed of "ſeparating, "faſting, praying, laying on of hands, and "ſending them forth," which are the circumſtances that attend ordinations in modern times, and the expreſſions that are often uſed to denote them; though I think little ſtreſs is laid on faſting, at leaſt among ſome.

Now "ſeparating" ſignifies no more than either appointing a perſon to any particular work that God thinks fit to employ him about; or to declare and publiſh him to be ſo appointed. So God called or ſeparated Bezaliel and Aholiab to work all manner of work of the "weaver, carver, engraver, em-"broiderer, and perfumer [g];" and afterwards Moſes publiſhed it [h]. So alſo God ſeparated the prieſts and Levites, the ark, the temple, and the utenſils of both, for his ſervice.

"Solemn prayer" was made by the church on divers important occaſions. They prayed [i], when nobody ordained Matthias; but he was choſen by the hundred and twenty, and appointed or ordained by God. They prayed [k], on the report that Peter and John made of their treatment by the high prieſt and rulers, after they had cured the lame beggar at the Beautiful gate of the temple. Prayer was

[g] Exod. xxxi. 2—12.
[h] Ibid. xxxiv. 30—35.
[i] Acts i. 24.
[k] Ibid. iv. 24.

made

made without ceaſing of the church unto God for Peter, when Herod had put him in priſon [l].

As to "the laying on of hands," it was a ceremony that attended prayer or benediction, or other ſolemn actions. So Jacob bleſſed Ephraim and Manaſſeh [m]. So the children of Iſrael laid their hands on the Levites, when they were to be ſeparated to the ſervice of Aaron and his ſons [n]. So our bleſſed Saviour, "when children were brought, that he ſhould "put his hands on them, and pray [o]" (which ſhews that this was a common uſage), "he "put his hands on them, and bleſſed them [p]." Laying on of hands was ſo far from being a peculiar circumſtance of ordination, or of any thing that had the leaſt relation to it, that it was frequently uſed by our Saviour in healing. Thus it is ſaid in Luke, that "he laid "his hands on all the ſick that were brought "him, and healed them [q]." Sometimes he did this by touching only [r]. And in the paſſage cited from St. Mark it may alſo be obſerved, from their deſiring our Saviour to put his hand upon the deaf and dumb man, that it was a common practice in conferring

[l] Acts xii. 5. [m] Gen. xlviii. 14.
[n] Numb. viii. 10. [o] Matt. xix. 13.
[p] Ver. 15. [q] Luke iv. 40.
[r] See Matt. viii. 3. Luke vii. 14. Matt. ix. 29. Mark vii. 32, 33.

great bleſſings, or in praying for them; and that touching was the ſame thing with laying on of hands: which may be likewiſe ſeen by our Saviour's touching the leper [s], and the blind man's eyes [t]. And as our Saviour ſometimes only touched the ſick, ſo at other times he laid his hands on them [u]; where the ſame thing is obſervable as I have remarked on Mar. vii. 32, 33; only with this difference, that Mar. viii. 22. they deſire Chriſt to "touch "the blind, and Chriſt lays his hands on "him;" whereas in Mar. vii. 32, 33, being deſired to "put his hands," he "touches him." So he alſo did Luke xiii. 13. And it was ſo uſual a thing to lay hands in order to heal, that our Saviour foretells, that "thoſe that "believe in his name, ſhall lay their hands on "the ſick, and that the ſick ſhall recover [w]." And accordingly Ananias lays his hands on Paul, that he might receive his ſight [x]. And Paul praying, and laying his hands on Publius's father, healed him [y]. The apoſtles laid their hands on the ſeven deacons, when they had prayed, though they were choſen and appointed by the multitude [z]. Farther; that laying on of hands was uſed in conferring the Holy Ghoſt, is plain from many places of ſcripture [a].

[s] Luke v. 12, 13.
[t] Matt. xx. 32—34.
[u] Mar. viii. 22, 23.
[w] Ibid. xvi. 18.
[x] Acts ix, 13. 17
[y] Ibid. xxviii. 8.
[z] Ibid. vi. 1—7.
[a] See the Firſt and Second Eſſay.

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The ſum of all this is, that "the laying on of "hands" will not by any means neceſſarily denote ordination, ſince it denotes ſo many other things.

And that "ſending forth" does not ſignify ordination, is plain from the following paſſages. The apoſtles, when they heard that the Samaritans had received the word of God, "ſent unto them Peter and John[b]." When the brethren knew that the Grecians went about to ſlay Saul, they "brought him down "to Ceſarea, and ſent him forth to Tarſus[c]." When tidings came to the church which was at Jeruſalem, of the great converſion of the Grecians at Antioch, they "ſent forth Bar-"nabas," who was a prophet, that he ſhould go as far as Antioch[d].

Some have thought that the laying of hands on Barnabas and Saul was to give them the Holy Ghoſt; but that cannot be, becauſe they are ſaid to have "been full of the Holy "Ghoſt[e]" long before.

And if we will allow the ſcripture to explain itſelf, this "ſeparating, faſting, praying, "laying on of hands, and ſending forth," was neither ordination, nor conferring the Holy Ghoſt on them; but only a recommending them by the church to the grace of God. For we read, that "when Paul and Barnabas

[b] Acts viii. 14. [c] Ibid. ix. 30.
[d] Ibid. xi. 22. [e] Ibid. ix. 17. xi. 24.

"had

" had fulfilled the work for which they had " been ſent forth, they returned to Antioch, " from whence they had been recommended " to the grace of God[f];" which with St. Luke, therefore, is an expreſſion equivalent to " ſeparating them by faſting, praying, laying " on their hands, and ſending them forth[g]." And this was a cuſtom repeated by the church on a like ſolemn occaſion. For, when Paul ſet out for Antioch with Silas, on his ſecond peregrination, they were " recommended by " the brethren unto the grace of God[h];" the very ſame expreſſion which we juſt now obſerved St. Luke uſed, to denote the praying, faſting, and laying on of hands, and ſending Barnabas and Saul[i]; and no doubt deſcribes here the ſame actions on Paul and Silas, as it does on Barnabas and Saul[k].

I cannot but think that St. Paul's ſtory, as it has been here repreſented, lies in a natural and undiſturbed order; worthy and becoming the wiſdom of Providence, in directing the remarkable ſteps of this great apoſtle, who muſt be allowed to have been freer from human imperfections, more highly favoured of God, and more ſerviceable to the recovering mankind to his faith and fear, and their own true happineſs and ſalvation, than any man

[f] Acts xiv. 26.
[g] Ibid. xiii. 2, 3.
[h] Ibid. xv. 40.
[i] Ibid. xiii. 3.
[k] Ver. 2, 3.

that

that ever lived in any age of the world. And I cannot but think, on the other hand, that, without this clue, St. Paul's hiſtory is extremely perplext and intricate: for, if it be ſuppoſed that he was made an apoſtle at his firſt converſion, he was made an apoſtle without ſeeing the perſon of Chriſt, without receiving any apoſtolical commiſſion, or the revelation of any doctrine from him; much leſs of the goſpel that he was to preach to the idolatrous Gentiles; or without being ſent to thoſe Gentiles, of whom alone he was the apoſtle; without preaching to them till at leaſt ten years after he was their apoſtle; and without teſtifying, or exerciſing any of the powers peculiar to an apoſtle, in all that time. He muſt on this hypotheſis likewiſe be ſuppoſed to have ſeen the other apoſtles at Jeruſalem, without communicating to any of them his character, the doctrine he preached, or the ſucceſs he met with; nay, and without being owned by them as ſuch; or ſo much as received the firſt time by them even as a diſciple, till they were certified by Barnabas that he was one, though that was three years after his converſion. It muſt likewiſe on this ſuppoſition have been about ten years after his being an apoſtle, before he was ever ſtyled an apoſtle; and that during all that time he was only ſtyled a prophet and a teacher, and before he was called Paul, the name he uſed

on

on his being the apoſtle of the Gentiles: and we muſt alſo ſuppoſe him, though an apoſtle, to have been placed after Barnabas (who was no apoſtle at that time), and three others who never were apoſtles), by St. Luke the great friend and companion of St. Paul; and to have been ſought out by Barnabas, and in ſome meaſure adviſed and directed by him, where to go, and what to do, in the diſcharge of his apoſtolical office. Each of theſe ſuppoſitions is load enough to ſink the hypotheſis of Paul's being an apoſtle at his firſt converſion, much more all of them put together; and moſt of them are in a great meaſure as much againſt the ſuppoſition of his being made an apoſtle at the firſt time of his being at Jeruſalem after his converſion.

Beſides, if he was an apoſtle before the ſecond time of his being at Jeruſalem, what can be the meaning of Chriſt's ſending him at that time to the Gentiles, to whom, upon this ſuppoſition, he was ſent before? What was the work to which the Spirit, in the mouth of the prophets of the church of Antioch, ſaid he had called him, and to which he was then ſolemnly to be ſeparated; and to which Mark, who went with them as far as Perga in Pamphylia, would not go? When was Barnabas declared to be an apoſtle of the Gentiles, if not at this time? And if he was at this time, how could Paul, who was called jointly with him, be called at any other? How

came

came they then to go to the idolatrous Gentiles, if he or they had been with them before? And how came he, after going to them, and returning to the ſame church, to rehearſe how God had opened the door of faith to thoſe very Gentiles? How comes St. Paul then immediately to exerciſe all the apoſtolical powers among them, and afterwards to return to the ſame churches, and go on farther among the Gentiles; and at laſt, after this, to write ſeveral epiſtles to them; without our ever hearing the leaſt word of all this concerning him before? And how comes he, only the third time of his being at Jeruſalem (that is, four or five years after his ſecond time of being there, or, which is the ſame thing, of ſeeing this viſion firſt), to have communicated the goſpel of the Gentiles to Peter, James, and John, and to them but privately; and to have been then, together with Barnabas, firſt received and owned at Jeruſalem, by thoſe pillars of the church, as a fellow-apoſtle?

I chooſe to do it the rather, becauſe many ſerious chriſtians and learned divines entertain ſcruples from this decree, which ſeem to me to be altogether unneceſſary, and are very troubleſome in private life; eſpecially as the way of eating is now ordered in all the countries of Europe. And as many ſerious chriſtians are full of ſcruples on this head, ſo the more learned have been always extremely divided in their ſentiments of the way by which theſe ſcruples ſhould be removed; without any of them, in my opinion, having hit on the right. Others have taken occaſion from this decree to make great exceptions to the chriſtian religion itſelf; as neither giving us the liberty, from the laws of Moſes, that it pretends, or that reaſon itſelf would indulge; and that conſequently it neither is that free or reaſonable ſervice that its votaries have repreſented it to be. So that this decree has been thought a law binding all chriſtians, and at all times, by ſome; and only binding all chriſtians for ſome time, and under certain circumſtances, by others. Some alſo have thought all theſe things unlawful in their own nature; and others have taken an handle from hence to repreſent them all as indifferent: whilſt the enemies of chriſtianity have endeavoured to repreſent this decree, not only as unworthy of chriſtianity, by forbidding things indifferent; but

have

have endeavoured to turn it into ridicule, for mixing the prohibition of things in their own nature indifferent, with the prohibition of things in their own nature unlawful. So ſingularly unhappy has this decree been above all other parts of Scripture; and ſo entirely have the divines, and indeed the Greek and Latin churches, been divided about it.

On the other hand, I hope to ſhew, that this decree is ſo far from binding all chriſtians at all times, or all chriſtians under certain circumſtances for ſome time; that it never related to any chriſtians but ſuch as became converts to chriſtianity from having been proſelytes of the gate, and to them only whilſt the Jewiſh polity laſted: and therefore that it has abridged the other Gentile chriſtians of none of that liberty that reaſon and the goſpel ever pretended to give; that it contains no precepts of an heterogeneous nature to thoſe to whom it was addreſſed; nor gives the leaſt handle to chriſtians now, to think the matters forbidden in this decree to be either all of them unlawful, or all of them indifferent. If the interpretation I ſhall advance will anſwer what I here propoſe, it will have advantages that no other ſcheme has which I have yet met with. For though Dr. Spencer has written on this

ſubject with more learning and invention than any other, and has been ſince generally followed by the ableſt divines; yet I think he has left it in the ſtate, he ſays, he found it, when he tells us, "Quod theologi pleri-"que omnes in eo explicando conatu irrito "laboraſſe, et difficultates in eo contentas non "tam ſolviſſe, quam evitaſſe, videantur [m]." Which aſſertion he endeavours afterwards to prove [n], of the five moſt celebrated hypotheſes of divines about it.

However, if this learned man has miſtaken the perſons to whom the letter that contains this decree is addreſſed, by which he has been led into an entire miſtake of the grounds and reaſons on which it went, and of the meaning of ſeveral paſſages in the chapter where it occurrs; yet he has with great learning and judgement explained the matter and ſubſtance of it. So that he has not only removed the rubbiſh (which encumbered this decree) with great labour and ſkill: but has laid a ſolid foundation to build on; unhappy as, in my opinion, he himſelf has been in raiſing the ſuperſtructure. I entirely concurr with him in the explication he gives of the parts of this decree. I ſhall, therefore, but juſt mention what I underſtand by them, and refer the reader to his learned diſſertation for

[m] In Pref. Diſſert. in loc. in Lib. de Leg. Heb. Rit. p. 471. Edit. Cant. [n] Cap. ii.

a fuller

a fuller explication and proof of the meaning of them. And, indeed, it were to be wiſhed, that every one who makes the Bible his ſtudy would not only read this diſſertation, but his incomparable book: where, if a little indulgence be given to the ſtiffneſs that prevailed in the time when he wrote, and to ſome favourite opinions, the reader will find nothing to diſtaſte him; and an immenſe treaſure of learning, mixed with a great deal of wit and judgement, diſpoſed in a neat and accurate manner, and expreſſed with all the clearneſs, life, and elegance imaginable, for his inſtruction and entertainment.

By "things offered to idols," I then underſtand any meat or drink devoted or offered to an image or idol; but eſpecially ſuch as had been offered to an idol in the idol's temple.

By "blood," I mean the blood ſeparated from the fleſh (which was generally done in the greater beaſts only; ſuch as ſheep, oxen, lambs, goats, kids, &c.), either drunk by itſelf, or mingled with other liquors, or mixed up with flower, ſpice, &c.

By "things ſtrangled," I underſtand creatures ſtrangled or ſuffocated with deſign to keep the blood in them, in order to be eaten; which generally was uſed in fowl, birds, and game; ſuch as hares, rabbits, &c.: and I ſuppoſe every animal was underſtood to be ſtrangled

which was not ſlain in ſuch a manner as "to have his blood poured out," as it is ordered in Leviticus [o]. The Cambridge copy has not "things ſtrangled," and one or two of the fathers quote the text with that omiſſion; yet that it is a part of the text is very well proved by Dr. Gale [p] (againſt Dr. Mill in his Prolegomena). And,

By "fornication," I underſtand uncleanneſs of any ſort (which is the true ſenſe of the word πορνεία), and which was practiſed in every kind by the heathens, as part of the worſhip performed to their idols; even in the very worſt inſtances of thoſe abominations which are mentioned in Leviticus [q].

I have deſcribed things ſtrangled, as ſtrangled with deſign to keep the blood in them, that I might exclude things dying of themſelves, or things torn, becauſe it is plain that Moſes diſtinguiſhes them from things ſtrangled (as is very juſtly obſerved by Dr. Spencer); not only allowing the Iſraelites to give them to the proſelytes of the gate (who might conſequently eat them), or ſell them to an alien [r]; but forbidding the Iſraelites, and the proſelytes of righteouſneſs, to eat them (not under the penalty of being cut off, as he does the four that I have mentioned; but)

[o] Lev. xvii. 13.
[p] In his Sermons, vol iv. p. 183—187, and p. 203, 204.
[q] Chap. xviii. [r] Deut. xiv. 21.

only

only under the ſmall penalty of "being un-
"clean till he had waſhed himſelf, and till the
"even[s]."

By "proſelytes of the gate," I underſtand Gentiles by birth, who quitted the heathen idolatry, but did not embrace the Jewiſh religion[t]; and who, on account of quitting paganiſm, were permitted to dwell in Paleſtine; and had ſeveral civil privileges allowed them, and liberty to join in all acts of worſhip that were in uſe before the law (or that were of patriarchal right and uſage, and were not peculiar to the Jews), whilſt they dwelt or ſojourned in Paleſtine: on condition only of obſerving the laws of ſociety, and ſuch laws of Moſes as related particularly to themſelves, and which were theſe four juſt now mentioned. For though, as Selden proves beyond contradiction, more than this was neceſſary to make a man a proſelyte of the gate, when the Jews were an independent government in flouriſhing circumſtances (particularly their being admitted as ſuch by one of their inferior courts, and other agreements which they held them to); yet they conſidered all thoſe as proſelytes of the gate, who worſhiped the true God, and abſtained from theſe four things, when they came to be more under the power of others[t].

[s] Lev. xvii. 15.
[t] Seld. de Jur. Nat. ap. Heb. l. ii. c. 3, 4. l. iii. c. 5, 10.

That theſe four prohibitions were given by Moſes to the proſelytes of the gate, and at one time and place, will appear from the xviith and xviiith chapters of Leviticus. And in this I have Dr. Spencer with me[n]. The "eating things offered to idols," is forbidden in the xviith chapter, from the firſt verſe to the eighth: where great care is taken, leſt the children of Iſrael ſhould eat of any of the ſacrifices or offerings unto devils or falſe gods; by commanding them to eat of no fleſh (that was allowed to be offered in ſacrifice) whoſe blood was not firſt offered to the God of Iſrael, at the door of his tabernacle: the heathens not eating any meat that had not been offered to devils or falſe gods, ſome way or other; and that, they thought, they did, if they either ſhewed it to their gods, or offered them all the blood or any part of it. Now, that the Iſraelites might not either uſe this idolatrous rite themſelves, or eat of any beaſt that had been thus offered; they were ordered to kill no beaſt in the field, that they deſigned to eat, but to ſlay it at the door of the tabernacle, and offer the blood to God; whereby the eating of any thing offered to an idol was moſt effectually prevented: ſince by this means they could eat nothing that had not been firſt offered to God. And then, as the eating things offered to idols is forbidden the Iſraelites,

[n] Cap. 3. Diſſert. in loc. § 4. verſ. fin. p. 503.

and

and the method which is to prevent it thus enjoined them, from the firſt to the eighth verſe; ſo it is forbidden the proſelytes of the gate, from the eighth to the tenth. I muſt deſire the reader to peruſe the fourth ſection of the third chapter of Spencer's diſſertation on this ſubject, and the firſt ſection of the eleventh chapter of his ſecond book "De Leg. Hebr. Rit." However, though Grotius, as well as Spencer, is of opinion, that the eighth and ninth verſes are meant of a proſelyte of the gate; yet moſt interpreters think they are meant of a proſelyte of righteouſneſs: among which is Dr. Patrick, the late Biſhop of Ely, whoſe learned Commentary is ſo generally eſteemed [w]. But I think to ſuppoſe the eighth and ninth verſes to relate only to a proſelyte of righteouſneſs, is making the law contained in theſe verſes a needleſs repetition: ſince the general law, that ſays, "one law ſhall be to him that is "home-born, and unto the ſtranger that ſo-"journeth among you [x]," would have entirely ſuperſeded this repetition, and made it altogether unneceſſary.

"Blood" is expreſſly forbiden to the proſelytes of the gate, as well as to the Iſraelites; from the tenth verſe to the thirteenth.

[w] See Patr. in loc. [x] Exodus xii. 49.

"Things ſtrangled" are as expreſſly forbidden to the proſelytes of the gate as to the Iſraelites, in the thirteenth verſe. For there the blood of any fowl or beaſt, that was caught in hunting, is forbidden to be eat in it; and is ordered to be poured on the ground, and covered with the duſt. And that this relates to the eating of the fowl or beaſt (with the blood in it, or ſtrangled) is plain, becauſe theſe are the creatures that uſed to be ſtrangled, as partridges, hares, &c; and becauſe it immediately follows the prohibition of eating blood. For, unleſs this prohibition be underſtood of blood kept in the body of the beaſt or fowl, it is but the ſelf-ſame prohibition with that in the former verſe: which cannot be ſuppoſed,

"Fornication," or uncleanneſs of all ſorts, or all abominations or abominable cuſtoms of the nations, by which they might defile themſelves either after the manners of Egypt or Canaan, that is, all kinds of uncleanneſs, are forbidden the proſelytes of the gate, chap. xviii. from the firſt verſe to the end of the chapter. In this too I have Spencer with me. The 26th verſe is expreſs to this purpoſe: "Ye ſhall therefore keep my ſtatutes, "and ſhall not commit any of theſe abomi- "nations, neither any of your own nation" (that is, neither an Iſraelite born, nor a proſelyte of righteouſneſs, who becomes one of your

your nation, and for whom there is but one law with the Jew), "nor the ſtranger that "ſojourneth among you" (that is, the proſelyte of the gate). And the reaſon that is given in the 27th and 28th verſes, why neither any of the Jewiſh nation, nor the ſtranger that ſojourneth among them, ſhould commit any of theſe abominations, is, "for all theſe "abominations have the men of the land "done which were before you, and the land "is defiled. That the land ſpue not you "out alſo, when ye defile it; as it ſpued out "the nations that were before you." Now if all the uncleanneſs and abominations forbidden in the former part of the chapter were unlawful even to the nations that inhabited Canaan; how much more muſt they have been ſo to the ſtrangers that ſojourned among them? and therefore, if any of them did commit any of theſe abominations, they "were to be cut off[y]."

The proſelytes of the gate were, no doubt, forbidden other things by the law of Moſes: yet they were ſuch as the law of nature forbad too; as idolatry, theft, murder, adultery, falſe witneſs, &c. and which could not be committed without the moſt manifeſt injury to ſociety, or at leaſt that form of it that was ſettled among the Jews. But as theſe could admit of no debate among the enquirers at

[y] Exodus xii. 29.

Antioch;

Antioch; ſo there could be no room for a queſtion or anſwer concerning them, And it is true too, that the proſelytes of the gate were to abſtain from many other things, that were no more unlawful in themſelves than things ſtrangled and blood. Yet that was not by Moſes's law, but by uſage and cuſtom, or by agreements of the Jewiſh government with them, when that government was in flouriſhing circumſtances; which it was very far from being at this time. Mr. Selden, according to his particular dialect, mentions theſe things as forbidden them, "nec jure "naturali, nec jure gentium imperativo, ſed "interveniente [z]."

Perhaps there were ſome other things forbidden or enjoined them by the law of Moſes itſelf, that were of the ſame claſs; but then it was whilſt they were in Paleſtine: as, putting leaven out of their houſes in the time of unleavened bread; and it may be, one or two more of the like kind. But none of theſe could occaſion a queſtion, or debate, among proſelytes living in Syria and Cilicia, out of the Holy Land. And though I am of opinion with Spencer, that a proſelyte of the gate was enjoined to keep the ſabbath by the fourth commandment, for the reaſons which he gives [a]; yet I cannot but agree with him, and Selden too,

[z] Seld. de Jur. Nat. Heb. lib. ii. [a] Lib. i. § 12.

that

that the Jews, at and before our Saviour's time, were ſo far from thinking proſelytes of the gate bound to keep the ſabbath, that they puniſhed them ſeverely if they did [b]; ſo that there could be no room for queſtion, debate, or advice, about the proſelytes of the gate keeping the ſabbath, though they were enjoined to obſerve it by the fourth commandment.

However, as my hypotheſis ſuppoſes things offered to idols, blood, things ſtrangled, and fornication, to have been expreſſly forbidden by Moſes to the proſelytes of the gate; I muſt deſire my reader to peruſe a paraphraſe and notes on the xviith chapter of Leviticus (which I have annexed by way of Appendix) before he goes any farther; where I take three of theſe prohibitions to be contained. As to the fourth, namely, fornication, which is contained in the xviith chapter, it is ſo expreſſly forbidden to the ſtranger that ſojourned among them, that I believe what I have ſaid of that already will be ſufficient. Origen (who was beſt acquainted with Jewiſh learning of any of the fathers) was of this opinion; and expreſſly ſays, "you ſee, there-"fore, that the law of abſtaining from blood, "which was given in common to the chil-"dren of Iſrael, and to the ſtrangers, &c." I quote him only to this purpoſe, knowing that he, as well as other of the fathers, was

[b] Selden. Spencer, ibid.

againſt

againſt any chriſtians eating any of the four things prohibited in this decree[c], of which I ſhall ſay ſomething towards the cloſe of this Eſſay. I have given this paraphraſe of the xviith chapter the rather, becauſe I find the learned Dr. Patrick, late Biſhop of Ely, to have been of a different opinion, in his Commentary on this place. And though I think Mr. Pyle comes nearer to the ſenſe of this chapter, in his late excellent Paraphraſe on the Pentateuch, yet I apprehend he has not exactly hit it; eſpecially in ſome of the verſes. Whether I have been more fortunate, I muſt leave to the reader to judge, after he has conſidered the notes by which I endeavour to ſupport the ſenſe I have given to the chapter in my paraphraſe. For I think a paraphraſe of ſuch unconnected laws, given in the early ages of the world, and tranſlated from a dead language, cannot ſupport itſelf by a bare reference to the text; without the aſſiſtance of notes, to prove that to be the true meaning of the text, which the paraphraſe repreſents to be contained in it.

Perhaps ſome may enquire, why Moſes ſhould forbid theſe four expreſſly to the proſelytes of the gate. And ſince the giving an anſwer to this queſtion may be of ſome uſe in our enquiry, though it does not fall ſo directly under it; my opinion is, that they

[c] Orig. in Matt. xv.

were forbidden them, as the things that were at that time the chief inticement, concomitants, or ſymptoms, of idolatry. Now as renouncing idolatry, and worſhiping the one true God, was the only reaſon why any could juſtly deſire the privilege of being a proſelyte of the gate, and the only reaſon why the Jews ſhould grant it (for they were not to ſuffer an idolater to live, he being guilty of high-treaſon under a theocracy); ſo Moſes expreſſly forbad them theſe things, as what uſed chiefly to accompany idolaters, or tempt them, or the Iſraelites among whom they were to live, actually to become guilty of that crime. If Spencer's diſſertation on this place of ſcripture be read with this view, it may, in my opinion, be read with great uſe; eſpecially the third chapter: for what he there aſſigns (groundleſs in my apprehenſion) as the reaſons why the council forbad theſe things to the chriſtians are, I believe, the true reaſons why Moſes forbad them to the proſelytes of the gate.

Having thus explained all the terms of the decree, I ſhall endeavour to prove that it related only to ſuch as were converted to chriſtianity from firſt being proſelytes of the gate. And I think that may be fully proved from the following conſiderations:

I. From the place where the queſtion aroſe that gave occaſion to the decree; Antioch in Syria, the firſt chriſtian church of proſelytes of

of the gate. That there was a famous Jewiſh univerſity in this city, and that it was full of Jews, and of proſelytes of the gate, we learn from Joſephus [d], and the Roman laws [e]. And indeed theſe proſelytes of the gate were very numerous in moſt of the places where there were Jews; and comprehended moſt of the ſober and well-diſpoſed Gentiles in thoſe parts; who did not go over entirely to the Jewiſh religion, and who were comparatively but few, becauſe of the difficulty of circumciſion, and the other terms they muſt ſubmit to; whereas it could ſcarce happen that well-diſpoſed men ſhould make much ſcruple of becoming proſelytes of the gate, when they could have hopes of future happineſs on ſo eaſy terms as worſhiping the true God only, and abſtaining from theſe four things; whereas no falſe God at that time gave any hopes of the reward of the life to come: ſo that it is no wonder, as the learned and ſagacious Mr. Jo. Mede obſerves [f], "that there "were ſo many proſelytes of the gate in the "ſeveral countries where the Jews were diſ-"perſed." Theſe proſelytes of the gate had been firſt converted to chriſtianity by the men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who were among thoſe that were diſperſed on the firſt perſecution

[d] Joſeph. de Bell. Judaic. lib. vii. cap. iii. § 3.
[e] See Grot. in Proleg. ad Luc.
[f] See his Diatr. p. 22. Lond. Ed.

that

that enſued Stephen's martyrdom, and are called Grecians [g]. It ſhould be read Ἕλληνας, and not Ἑλληνιστὰς, and ſhould have been rendered Gentiles, not Grecians [h]. And that they were devout Gentiles, is farther evident from this phraſe, that, on the preaching of the men of Cyprus and Cyrene, they are ſaid "to turn unto the Lord [i]," being turned unto God already, as we ſhall ſhew in the courſe of this Eſſay. This is the more probable from the Greek phraſe uſed about them [k], which is not λαὸς ἱκανὸς, but ὄχλος ἱκανὸς προσετέθη τῷ Κυρίῳ. And now ὄχλος is the word St. Luke often uſes concerning a multitude, or any very great number, as may be ſeen in the Acts [l]. I confeſs St. Luke in the Acts uſes this word (ὄχλος), in conjunction with ſome other word, of a riotous multitude or aſſembly of Jews, or to ſignify a number or a company of any ſort; but I think his avoiding the word λαὸς, not in a good ſenſe here, and his uſing the word ὄχλος here, which is never applied by him or any other ſacred writer of the New Teſtament to any but Jews, or to the Gentiles when ſpoken of under the notion of a people that God took to himſelf as he did the Jews, or inſtead

[g] Acts xi. 20.
[h] See the Abſtract.
[i] Ver. 21.
[k] Ver. 24.
[l] Acts xiii. 45. xiv. 11, 13, 14, 18, 19. xvi. 22. xvii. 8, 13. xix. 26, 33, 35.

of

of the Jews, gives a great countenance to the opinion, that theſe were not Jews, but devout Gentiles. He that will conſult the places where the word λαὸς is uſed in the New Teſtament, will not have much doubt of the truth of this criticiſm upon it. I farther obſerve, that no word is ſo much oppoſed to Ἰουδαίοις as Ἕλληνες. Inſtances are numerous in the Acts, as well as the Epiſtles. Nor are Ἑλληνισταὶ oppoſed to Ἰουδαίοις, but Ἑβραίους [m]. This may further ſerve to ſhew that Ἕλληνας is the true reading here. Theſe are taken notice of by St. Luke, as the great harveſt of the proſelyte converts, that enſued on the converſion of Cornelius and his family, who were the firſt fruits of theſe Gentiles.

This reading and verſion reſtores good ſenſe and order to St. Luke's hiſtory, and force to his remark. For then it ſtands thus: "Having entered on the hiſtory of the converſion "of the proſelytes of the gate, in the account "of Cornelius and his family [n]; and having "given an account of the expoſtulation of "thoſe that were of the circumciſion with "him on that account [o] of Peter's juſtification [p]; and of their acquieſcence, on ſeeing "plainly that God had then granted, or "begun to grant, repentance unto life unto "the Gentiles (that is, the proſelytes of the

[m] Acts vi. 1.
[n] Chap. x.
[o] Chap. xi. 1—4.
[p] Ver. 4—18.

gate),

"gate [q], immediately adds [r], that upon this, "though they that were ſcattered abroad upon "Stephen's perſecution had hitherto only "preached to the Jews, notwithſtanding that "they had travelled as far as Phœnice, and Cy- "prus, and Antioch (ſome of which were men of "Cyprus and Cyrene); yet, on the occaſion of "the former tranſaction, in relation to Corne- "lius and his family, and the acquieſcence of "the whole church at Jeruſalem in it, they "being at Antioch, now begin to ſpeak unto "the Gentiles" (that is, the ſame ſort of Gen- tiles that had been diſcourſed of in all this and the preceding chapter; that is, proſelytes of the gate). But where is the order of St. Luke's hiſtory, if Ἑλληνιςὰς, Grecians, be the true reading; ſince his hiſtory will then go backward, and, after giving an account of the converſion of proſelyted Gentiles, return to the hiſtory of the converſion of Helleniſt Jews? and how will Grecians, that is, Hel- leniſt Jews, or Jews that ſpoke Greek, or Jews that uſed no other tongue but the Greek, and Jews by proſelytiſm (in one of which ſenſes the Grecians or Helleniſts muſt be taken), ſtand oppoſed to Jews [s]? Will it be good ſenſe to ſay, "that the men "of Cyprus and Cyrene, who had in their "travels, as far as Antioch, ſpoken hi-

[q] Ver. 18. [r] Ver. 19.
[s] Ibid.

" therto to none but the Jews only, ſpoke " now to the Jews?" or would it be of any moment for St. Luke to have ſaid, " that " they, who before had ſpoken to Jews that " uſed the Hebrew as their mother tongue, " now firſt ſpoke to Jews that uſed the " Greek;" or "that they who had ſpoken " before to ſuch as were Jews by conver- " ſion [t], now ſpake to Jews by religion;" if that was true, as it is not? or where will be the force of the remark that is plainly introduced on the ſtory of the converſion of Cornelius, and which, according to the common reading and our verſion, muſt be this; namely, " that thereupon the men " of Cyprus and Cyrene converted Helleniſt " Jews, who had been converted before in " great multitudes [u]?" So that we may be fully aſſured, that Ἕλληνας, Gentiles, is the true reading and rendering of the place.

Upon the news of the ſucceſs which the men of Cyprus and Cyrene had met with among theſe proſelytes of the gate at Antioch being brought to the ears of the apoſtles, who continued at Jeruſalem (notwithſtanding the perſecution, to look out and conſult for the good of the church), they, according to their uſual vigilance, ſend Barnabas thither; a man peculiarly ſuited to exhort theſe people,

[t] Acts xi. 19. [u] Ibid. vi. 1.

being

being not only "a prophet [w]," but "a good "man" (ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς, that is, a man of a ſweet and benign temper, not likely to lay greater burdens on the proſelyte converts than were neceſſary), "and full of the Holy Ghoſt, and "of faith [x]." He, finding more buſineſs among them than he could go through, goes to Tarſus, to find Saul; and bringing him with him to Antioch, they for a whole year taught much people there, that is, great numbers of proſelytes of the gate. Inſomuch that, taking the name of "Brethren" upon them, which they did not know whether the Jewiſh chriſtians, who took the name of Brethren to themſelves [y], would allow them, conſidering their prejudices againſt them, whom they treated as ſtrangers; they take a new name, namely, that of "Chriſtians [z]," from Chriſt their great maſter, according to the Greek cuſtom, as we ſee was the caſe in Pythagoreans, Platoniſts, Ariſtotelians, and Epicureans, &c. And perhaps with an alluſion to "the unction," which Cornelius and his family, the firſt fruits of theſe proſelytes at Cæſarea, had received from Chriſt, whom, St. Peter ſays in his diſcourſe to them, "God "anointed with the Holy Ghoſt, and with "power [a]." Some think this new name of

[w] Acts xiii. 1.
[x] Ibid. xi. 23, 24.
[y] Ver. 1.
[z] Ver. 26.
[a] Acts x. 38.

Chriſtians, which theſe proſelytes of the gate converted to chriſtianity took, was agreeable to the prophecy of Iſaiah [b]. But, notwithſtanding their taking this new name at the firſt, yet afterwards the appellation of "bre-"thren" is given them by the church of Jeruſalem, on a full conſideration of their caſe [c]. And it is highly probable there were no Jewiſh converts in this church, not only from this conſideration, that they never ſeem to have been troubled with the queſtion about the neceſſity of circumciſion by any among themſelves, but were perfectly at quiet till the Jewiſh falſe brethren from Jeruſalem came among them [d].

And as we do not read of any Jewiſh converts in this church, ſo we never read of any idolatrous Gentiles converted here; either before Barnabas and Saul were ſent on this work of converting the Gentiles, when to be ſure no idolatrous Gentiles had been converted [e], nor after their return to this church from that work. Nor indeed do we then hear of their converting any: but only of their abiding "long time with the diſciples," inſtructing them that were already diſciples or chriſtians more fully in the doctrines of Chriſt [f].

[b] Iſaiah lxv. 15.
[c] Acts xv. 23.
[d] Ver. 1.
[e] Ibid. xiv. 27. See Eſſay III.
[f] Acts xiv. 28.

And

And indeed this church ſeems to me, to have been at firſt deſigned by God, in his providence, and continued all along, as a church made up of proſelytes of the gate, to prepare Paul and Barnabas for preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles, as well as the Jewiſh chriſtians for receiving the news of whole churches being made up of ſuch as had been idolatrous Gentiles (which was very ſurprizing, if not ſhocking, to many of them at firſt, and eſpecially to underſtand that they were to receive them in the Lord); and to be in ſome ſort, if I may ſo expreſs it, the mother church of the idolatrous Gentiles, as Jeruſalem was of the Jews: for, as the apoſtles and apoſtolick men were ſent from the church of Jeruſalem to convert Jews, Samaritans, and proſelytes of the gate, to which afterwards they return to give an account of their ſucceſs; ſo were the apoſtles Barnabas and Saul ſent on their firſt peregrination by the church of Antioch, to convert the idolatrous Gentiles to the faith [g]; and return thither at the end of it, and "re-"hearſe all that God had done with them [h]. So likewiſe Paul and Silas are ſent out by the ſame church, on Paul's ſecond peregrination [i] (and perhaps Barnabas and Mark too [k]). And at the end of this ſecond peregrination, they "went to Antioch, and ſpent ſome time

[g] Acts xiii. 2, 3, 5.
[h] Ibid. xiv. 26, 27.
[i] Ibid. xv. 40.
[k] Ver. 39.

"there[l]," not barely to ſtay with their chriſtian friends, but in all likelihood to rehearſe what God had done with them in this ſecond peregrination; as they had done in the firſt. From hence Paul likewiſe departs on his third peregrination[m]; and in all probability recommended by the church to the grace of God, as in the two former. And as it is highly probable that, after Paul's firſt impriſonment at Rome, he came to Jeruſalem[n]; ſo it is very probable he might from thence go to Antioch, as he did every other time he went up to Jeruſalem after commencing an apoſtle; and might from thence probably ſet out on that fifth peregrination, which, as we gather from other places of ſcripture, he went upon; though St. Luke does not carry the hiſtory of St. Paul ſo far[o]. And if theſe were the deſigns of Providence in ſettling this church, as a church of devout Gentiles converted to chriſtianity, Antioch muſt be allowed to be a city extremely well ſuited to that deſign; it being a city of Syria, a country that was thought by the Jews to be a ſort of middle nature, between the holineſs which they aſcribed to Paleſtine, and the pollution of other countries; and being, like the proſelytes of the gate, neither altogether holy nor pro-

[l] Act. xviii. 22, 23.
[m] Ibid.
[n] Heb. xiii. 19, 23.
[o] See the Abſtract.

fane;

fine[p]; and consequently a region fit for a great church of the proselytes of the gate converted to the faith.

From all these considerations, it appears that the church at Antioch was a church composed of proselytes of the gate; and that therefore the question and decree must relate to proselytes of the gate who were become christians.

II. This accounts for the rise of the question. For it does not seem probable that any of the Jews should first of all pretend, that idolatrous Gentiles, out of Palestine, and that never dwelt or sojourned in it, though converted to christianity, should be bound by Moses's law, who never thought it extended beyond the Jews (that is, Jews born, or such as would become Jews), or such as would live or sojourn in Palestine, and were entitled to certain privileges when they lived or sojourned there. On which account we do not find the zealots among the Jewish christians[q] concerned at all at what Paul had taught the Gentiles; but only at what they thought he had taught "the Jews that were "among the Gentiles." But, considering the notions they then had, it might easily come into their heads, that the proselytes of the gate, who were never admitted to live or so-

[p] See Reland's Sacred Antiquities of the Hebrews.
[q] Acts xxi. 20, 21.

journ in Paleſtine without ſubmitting to ſome of the laws of Moſes, nor to a full communion with the church of the Jews without ſubmitting to all thoſe laws, ſhould not be admitted to a full communion with the chriſtian church, and themſelves as a part of it, but on the ſame terms. This ran in all their heads, on Peter's firſt converting Cornelius and his family. For Luke tells us, they ſaid to Peter, "thou wenteſt in unto men "uncircumciſed," that is, proſelytes of the gate. And notwithſtanding Peter had ſatisfied them all for the preſent, yet this notion was apt to recur among ſome of them. And though perhaps they might carry this matter farther, and make this afterwards a queſtion about the idolatrous Gentiles, in the ſecond inſtance; yet it is not likely that they made it one about them in the firſt. Error, like vice, grows and is fruitful. A leſs error, like a ſmaller fault, will lead men into greater. But people do not uſually at once run into the greateſt vices or abſurdities. And indeed I have ſome doubt, whether the zealots ever inſiſted on the neceſſity of the idolatrous Gentiles obſerving the laws of Moſes, as they did in relation to the proſelytes of the gate. I rather believe, they endeavoured by artifices from falſe philoſophy, and by an addreſs to their fears and ſenſual pleaſures, to entice and draw them into a compliance with it.

it. This at leaſt appears to me on an attentive reading of the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians; and I think may be pretty obvious to any one, on reading the ſixth chapter of the epiſtle to the Galatians[r].

III. This is the more probable from the perſons that moved the queſtion at Antioch, "ſome of the ſect of the Phariſees that believed." Such at leaſt were thoſe who abetted them at Jeruſalem[s], and moſt likely ſome of the very zealots of that zealous ſect. Their conſtant opinion was, that no perſons ſhould be admitted to live quietly among them on the bare terms of proſelytiſm; much leſs be admitted to be Jews, without fully embracing their religion, and being circumciſed; as may be ſeen, on two great occaſions, in Joſephus[t]; whilſt others thought much leſs would do. So that it appears, from the very perſons that moved the queſtion, as well as the place where it was moved, that this in all probability was the queſtion now firſt moved in the chriſtian church; namely, whether the proſelytes of the gate, who, as the zealots pretended, could not ſo much as live among them, much leſs be thought Jews, without circumciſion, could ever be allowed to be a part of the church of Chriſt without

[r] Ver. 12, 13. [s] Acts xv. 5.
[t] Antiq. l. xx. c. 2. Vit. Joſeph, p. 1007. B. p. 1010. C. And Selden de Jur.

it?

it? And becauſe the Holy Ghoſt had given a full deciſion in the caſe of Cornelius, that they ought (as we ſhall ſee more fully preſently); therefore theſe men come with a pretended authority from the apoſtles, elders, and brethren at Jeruſalem; not putting it on the merit of the cauſe, after ſuch a full deciſion by the Holy Ghoſt to the contrary; but on a pretended new revelation, made ſince to the apoſtles at Jeruſalem, and now brought by them as meſſengers of the church of Jeruſalem to the church of Antioch. Every one will ſee, that this muſt have been naturally the firſt queſtion that theſe zealots at Jeruſalem were like to ſtir in the church, whatever queſtion they might from thence raiſe afterwards in relation to the idolatrous Gentiles, when they became acquainted with the news of their converſion.

So that this hypotheſis accounts well for the riſe of the queſtion; whether we conſider the queſtion itſelf, the perſons who moved it, and the place where, and conſequently the perſons about whom, it was moved. But I think my hypotheſis will be proved more unanſwerably from the conſiderations that follow. For,

IV. This hypotheſis alone agrees with ſeveral things that occurr in the debate.

1. With Peter's argument, which is entirely taken from the proſelyted (not from the idolatrous)

idolatrous) Gentiles converted to chriſtianity. For his argument is this: "God, in the caſe "of Cornelius" (the only caſe referred to in Peter's ſpeech), "has born witneſs to the "proſelytes of the gate, or declared them ac- "ceptable to him upon the terms of proſely- "tiſm" (that is, the obſervance of theſe four precepts, though they did not obſerve any of the other laws of Moſes), "by giving them "the Holy Ghoſt at Cæſarea, as he did to us at "the beginning, without any difference; "thereby ſhewing that he had purified their "hearts by faith, whom we all uſed to think "unclean, and whom you zealots ſtill conti- "nue to think ſo: therefore let thoſe terms, "and no more, be required of the proſelytes "of the gate converted to chriſtianity at An- "tioch, &c. [u]." Here the concluſion is well drawn from the premiſes. But it would be no argument to ſay, "The Holy Ghoſt, or "God by the Holy Ghoſt, has declared the "proſelytes of the gate (obliged by a particu- "lar law to certain abſtinences) acceptable to "him, on the terms of faith, and theſe abſti- "nences, and no other; therefore let us en- "join theſe abſtinences to idolatrous Gen- "tiles, who were never obliged to obſerve "them before."

[u] Acts xv. 7—12.

2. It

2. It agrees with James's quotation from Amos (which he brings to enforce Peter's argument, and to ſhew how agreeable his ſenſe was to a prophecy in that prophet), which relates only to the proſelytes of the gate, as far as St. James makes uſe of it: "After this "I will return, and will build again the ta- "bernacle of David which is fallen down "(by raiſing up Chriſt to ſit on David's "throne[w])—that the reſidue of men might "ſeek after the Lord." It is in the prophet, "that they may poſſeſs the reſidue of Edom" (that is, the worſt enemies of Iſrael, or a remnant of the moſt profligate and abandoned idolaters), "and all the Gentiles on whom "my name is called," that is, all the proſelytes of the gate, or by far the greater part of them. The ſenſe of the prophecy being this, is therefore very applicable to James's purpoſe; that, after Chriſt was ſet on David's throne, not only a remnant of the moſt abandoned idolaters ſhould become Chriſt's ſubjects, but all the Gentiles "on whom my "name is called," or who are called by my name, or call upon my name; that is, the proſelytes of the gate, who generally became chriſtians where chriſtianity was preached; being by far the beſt prepared of any to receive it, not only as they were free from idolatry on the one hand, but as they were like-

[w] Acts ii. 30.

wiſe

wiſe free from ſuperſtition on the other. For, as St. James adds, "known unto God "are all his works, from the beginning of "the world." Before Cornelius's converſion, there were but a few ſingle perſons among the Gentiles that feared God, Melchizedeck, Jethro, Job, &c.; but God deſigned all along "to viſit the Gentiles, to take out of them a "people for his name" (or, for his honour); and he, who knew this from the beginning, pointed it out to the Jews, by ordering ſuch perſons to be received among them, on their worſhiping God, and abſtaining from theſe prohibited things; and yet more fully, by ſending down the Holy Ghoſt on them, on his firſt viſiting the Gentiles by Peter, as we ſhall ſee more clearly by and by.

3. Agreeably hereunto is James's expreſſion alſo, when he comes to ſum up the matter; διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω, "wherefore my ſentence" (or my opinion or judgement) "is, that we "trouble not them which from among the "Gentiles are turned unto God;" the very deſcription of a proſelyte of the gate at that period, who were turned from "theſe vani-"ties unto the living God;" and being already turned unto God when they are converted to chriſtianity, they are not then ſaid to be turned unto God from idols, as the Theſſalonians are ſaid to be [x], when their bare conver-

[x] 1 Theſſ. i. 9.

ſion

ſion from idolatry is expreſſed; nor are they exhorted "to turn unto God," as the heathens at Lyſtra are [y]: but, being already turned unto God, when they are converted to chriſtianity, are ſaid to be "turned unto the Lord [z]." A like expreſſion St. Luke uſes of Lydia a proſelyte of the gate, that "the Lord opened "her heart [a];" and acquaints us, that ſhe ſaid concerning herſelf, unto Paul and his company, "if ye have judged me to be faithful "to the Lord [b]."

4. St. James's argument agrees to the proſelytes of the gate alone. It is this: "For "Moſes hath in old time, in every city, them "that preach him; being read in the ſynagogues every ſabbath day [c];" which is as much as to ſay, "Let the proſelyte converts "abſtain from things offered to idols, &c. after their converſion to chriſtianity, as they "did before their converſion: ſince they will "hear the law of Moſes read in the ſynagogues after their converſion as they did before. And as they were under an obligation "to abſtain from theſe things before their "converſion, in order to entitle themſelves "to thoſe privileges from the Jews, which "they enjoy as proſelytes of the gate, they "themſelves would certainly wonder with

y Acts xiv. 15.
z Ibid. xi. 21.
a Ibid. xvi. 14.
b Ver. 15.
c Ver. 21.

"reaſon,

" reaſon, if they ſhould, after their converſion " to chriſtianity, be indulged in any of thoſe " points which Moſes ſo poſitively forbids " them. Nor would they alone be ſurprized " at ſuch an indulgence; but thoſe Jews alſo " (who uſed to allow them, among other " privileges, to join in ſome parts of the tem- " ple and ſynagogue worſhip on theſe terms), " who will be highly incenſed at it, on hear- " ing the law of Moſes read and preached " every ſabbath-day, in which theſe abſti- " nences are ſo ſtrictly enjoined; and at the " ſame time very much enraged againſt " them for it, and againſt the chriſtian reli- " gion, that ſhould thus releaſe the proſelytes " of the gate from a civil obligation that they " were under to a law of a country where " they ſometimes ſojourn; and on which, " they are entitled to certain privileges there. " For that Moſes's law forbad the proſelytes " of the gate eating things offered to idols, " blood, things ſtrangled, and fornication, as " the condition of living or ſojourning and en- " joying certain privileges among them, I have " proved before." This is a paraphraſe of St. James's argument, that ſeems to me to be perfectly agreeable to his deſign, and cloſe to the words; whereas I have not ſeen any hi- therto, that either agrees with St. James's intention here, or with the words in which he expreſſes it.

V. This

V. This hypotheſis alone agrees with ſeveral things which occurr in the letter.

As, 1. with the addreſs of the letter. The addreſs of the letter is not in general to all the brethren which are of the Gentiles indefinitely; but to the "brethren of the Gen-"tiles which are turned unto God, in Anti-"och, Syria, and Cilicia." Now in Antioch the brethren were all proſelytes, as we have proved before; ſo it is more than probable they were in other parts of Syria and Cilicia: for the Jews were not now ſo ready to receive the goſpel as the proſelytes of the gate; and the proſelytes of the gate were more numerous in Syria and Cilicia, countries bordering on Judæa, than elſewhere; and St. Paul ſpent a conſiderable time there ſoon after the converſion of Cornelius [d], before he and Barnabas turned to the Gentiles [e]. The very direction of the letter plainly points it out to be written to the proſelytes that had become chriſtians in thoſe parts. For otherwiſe, why was it not directed to Antioch only, where the queſtion was debated? why to Syria and Cilicia, but that there were proſelyted converts there in great number? why not to all the brethren in Lycaonia, Pamphylia, Piſidia, but that they were chiefly brethren of another ſort, whom this queſtion

[d] Gal. i. 21. Acts xi. 25, 26. Ann. 42, 43.
[e] Acts xiii. 46. Ann. 45, 46.

did

did not concern? And though theſe converts to chriſtianity had not hitherto taken the name of Brethren, but of Chriſtians only, for reaſons already mentioned; yet they, being acknowledged to be witneſſed to by the Holy Ghoſt, and to be purified as well as they, are now owned as brethren by the church of Jeruſalem, and addreſſed to by them as ſuch.

I know it may be objected, that Paul and Silas are ſaid to deliver this decree "to the "churches in Lyſtra and Derbe" (cities of Lyconia), "to be kept by them[f]:" and it may be ſaid, that that ſhews it was intended for others, beſides the brethren in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia; and that therefore this decree might be intended for the idolatrous Gentiles, as well as for the proſelytes of the gate, if not for the idolatrous Gentiles only.

And I agree thus far, that to be ſure this decree was intended as a rule or advice to all proſelytes of the gate converted to chriſtianity, wherever they were; but was directed only to thoſe proſelytes of the gate that were converted to chriſtianity in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia; becauſe the greateſt number of them was there, and there the queſtion aroſe, and had been agitated: and therefore, if there were churches compoſed of proſelytes of the

[f] Acts xvi. 4.

gate converted to chriſtianity in other parts, as perhaps particularly there might at Derbe and Lyſtra (cities of Lycaonia, the very next country to Cilicia), it belonged to them, as well as to thoſe in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.

But I am apt to think that the churches to which Paul and Silas are ſaid to have "delivered the decrees to be kept[g]," are the churches of Syria and Cilicia, through which we are told "they went[h]:" for otherwiſe we have no account of Paul and Silas's delivering the decree to the churches in Syria and Cilicia, to whom it was directed as well as to thoſe of Antioch. And it would be ſomething extraordinary, if ſo accurate an hiſtorian as St. Luke ſhould give no account of this letter's being delivered to the brethren in Syria and Cilicia, as well as at Antioch; ſince it was directed to the former as well as to the latter. And it would be yet more extraordinary, if, after he had omitted to give us any account of this decree's being delivered to the brethren in Syria and Cilicia, to whom it was immediately addreſſed, he ſhould give us an account how it was delivered and received in Derbe and Lyſtra, cities of Lycaonia, to whom it was not addreſſed. And Acts xvi. 4, 5. agrees with Acts xv. 41, ſuppoſing them to belong to one another. For they will then

[g] Acts xvi. 4. [h] Ibid. xv. 41.

read

read thus: "And he (Paul with Silas[i]) went "through Syria and Cilicia confirming the "churches[k]; and as they went through the "cities (namely of Syria and Cilicia) they "delivered them the decrees to be kept, that "were ordained of the apoſtles and elders at "Jeruſalem. And ſo were the churches "eſtabliſhed in the faith, and increaſed in "number daily." And on the ſuppoſition that the 4th and 5th verſes of the xvith chapter ſhould be the 43d and 44th verſes of the xvth chapter; the 1ſt, 2d, and 3d verſes of the xvith chapter will ſtand well connected with the 6th and 7th verſes of the ſame chapter: and the taking out the 4th and 5th verſes, and adding them to the end of the preceding chapter, will make no chaſm or interruption in the xvith chapter. I ſhould therefore be apt to think that there is a tranſpoſition here, and that the 4th and 5th verſes of the xvith chapter ſhould be the 42d and 43d verſes of the xvth chapter; or elſe that the 1ſt, 2d and 3d verſes of the xvith chapter are a parentheſis, which perhaps is more likely to be the caſe[l]. But, however that matter is, if the decree had concerned others

[i] Acts xv. 40. [k] Ver. 41.

[l] The like parentheſes may be obſerved, Mark xvi. 3, 4. Gen. xiii. 10. Joſh. xxiv. 26. On which the reader may conſult Biſhop Kidder's Demonſtration of the Meſſiah, Part II. p. 103, 104.

beſides the proſelytes of the gate; how comes it to paſs, that St. Luke does not ſo much as mention Paul and Silas's carrying it farther than Lyſtra and Derbe, cities of the next country to Cilicia; if he even mentions their carrying it thither, and there be no parentheſis or tranſpoſition in the text? and why then does not he give us an account of their carrying it farther on, to all the countries of the Leſſer Aſia, to Macedonia, Greece, and Rome; and of the reception the churches in thoſe countries gave it, as well as the churches in Derbe and Lyſtra?

2. This hypotheſis alone agrees with ſeveral things in the body of the letter.

1. "It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt "and to us, to lay no greater burthen, than "to abſtain &c.[m]" I have proved in the Third Eſſay, that theſe words, "it ſeemed "good to the Holy Ghoſt and us," do not ſignify any immediate inſpiration that the apoſtles, elders, and brethren were under at that time (as has been generally thought, and even by Spencer, who ſays this council was Θεόπνευς⊙; though he a little after ſays, they omitted or forgot ſomething, which St. Paul afterwards ſupplied in one of his epiſtles[n]). When they therefore declare, "that it ſeemed

[m] Ver. 25.

[n] See Differt. in loc. cap. iv. in his ſolution to the third objection.

"good

"good to the Holy Ghoſt, and to us," it muſt relate to ſome deciſion which the Holy Ghoſt had made in this caſe, and from which they argued. Now that plainly refers to the caſe of Cornelius and his family; upon whom, we read, the Holy Ghoſt fell, as it did on the one hundred and twenty at the beginning[o]; by which, Peter ſays, "God bore them wit-"neſs, who knew their hearts[p]." Cornelius and his family were proſelytes of the gate. And in their converſion to chriſtianity the Holy Ghoſt fell on them, without being circumciſed, or embracing the Jewiſh religion, or ſubmitting to any more of the laws of Moſes than what proſelytes of the gate were ſubject to. And from hence they argue, that this was a plain and full declaration, or witneſs by the Holy Ghoſt, that proſelytes of the gate, as proſelytes of the gate, were acceptable to God, on their believing the word of the goſpel, without farther conformity to the law of Moſes. And if this be the meaning of theſe words (as I think nobody will doubt, on conſidering the plain reference the letter bears to Peter's and James's ſpeech), they can only relate to proſelytes of the gate converted to chriſtianity; but cannot by any means relate to idolatrous Gentiles, converted to it; to whom it was not known in this aſſembly that the Holy Ghoſt had ever born witneſs, by falling on

[o] Acts x. 44. xv. 8. xi. 15. [p] Ibid. x. 44. xv. 8.

them as he did on the apoſtles and their company at the beginning; if the Holy Ghoſt ever did fall, or at leaſt at this time had fallen, on them in that manner.

2. It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, and to us, to lay no greater burthen "than theſe "things."

Why theſe things, and no others? Why were not the brethren in Antioch &c. to abſtain from ſwines fleſh; a thing as abominable to the Jews, as ſtrictly forbidden by Moſes, as blood? Why were they not to abſtain from all other unclean meats? Why not from things torn or that died of themſelves? What reaſon can be given for this, but that theſe were not forbidden by the law of Moſes to a proſelyte of the gate[q], but to the Iſraelites only, that is, Iſraelites by birth or religion[r]; for by a ſtranger there is meant a proſelyte righteouſneſs[s].

Why theſe things of ſuch an heterogenous nature; things in their own nature unlawful, with things in their own nature indifferent, and all in the ſame decree? Or what ſhould make the church of Jeruſalem think of things that have ſo little ſeeming connection with one another as theſe four; but that theſe things were forbidden to the proſelytes of the gate by Moſes together, and the only

[q] Deut. xiv. 21. [r] Lev. xvii. 15.
[s] See Selden, de Jur. Nat.

things

things which were forbidden by him, that were not againſt the law of nature; as none of theſe were, but the laſt; and perhaps not even that, in every inſtance of it?

Why theſe things in the order they are here forbidden; things offered to idols, blood, things ſtrangled, and fornication; but that this is preciſely the order in which they are forbidden by Moſes to the proſelytes of the gate, in the xviith and xviiith chapter of Leviticus? And the order in which theſe are mentioned in the decree is the more remarkable, becauſe it is not the order in which they are mentioned in the debate by St. James[t]; though it is the order, not only in which they are mentioned in the decree in this chapter, but as the decree is repeated by St. James[u]: the reaſon of which difference I take to be this; that, when the apoſtles were debating, the order of things was rather obſerved, than the order of the prohibition; and ſo pollution of idols is mentioned firſt, as the likelieſt or moſt frequent enticement to idolatry; fornication as the ſtrongeſt; things ſtrangled as the next likely enticement to pollutions of idols; and blood as the leaſt temptation to idolatry of any of them all: pure blood, or mixed up in meat or drink,

[t] Acts xv. 20. [u] Ibid. xxi. 25.

Noah is the ſeventh; which is, not to tear off a limb from a live animal; by which, great cruelty to the animals was thought by the Jews to be forbidden [z]; and which undoubtedly was the caſe [a]. Nor is it likely, that Noah and his children thought they were reſtrained from things offered to idols, if they thought they were forbidden all ſpecies of fornication; which Grotius and Selden think they were not [b]. But, after all, are we ſure that more is meant by this prohibition, than that they ſhould not eat the fleſh of an animal that had life remaining in it, and the blood yet warm and flowing in the part they had torn from it to devour, as birds and beaſts of prey do?

"Neceſſary to all chriſtian Gentiles, by "chriſtian prudence, from the then ſtate of "things," ſay others: in which claſs Spencer has excelled. But where is any thing ſaid to be neceſſary in ſcripture, on this conſideration? This conſideration may make things ſaid to be expedient in ſcripture, but never ſimply neceſſary. And where is this notion hinted? From what is it collected by Spencer? From a vaſt farrago of Pagan and Jewiſh learning; but without a ſingle notice from

[z] Selden, ibid.
[a] See my Diſſert. on Gen. ix. 1—8.
[b] Grot. in Acts xv. 20. Selden, de Jur. Nat. lib. vii. c. 5.

the

the debate, or the letter, or the decree itſelf, to ſupport it. All the reaſonings to ſupport it can only be drawn by a man of equal learning with Spencer (from other fountains than this text or any other in the Bible); and are not to be underſtood without a great compaſs of thought, or to be retained without a very happy memory. Do any of the apoſtles write thus to chriſtians in any parallel caſe? We have ſomething ſimilar to that which Spencer ſuppoſes this to be, in the caſe of eating in the idols temple. Does St. Paul determine the thing abſolutely, going upon a concatenation of deep reaſoning, built on the knowledge of a great deal of divine and human learning? Or does he not ſupport his opinion by arguments, and anſwers to objections, and then appeal to the judgement of his reader? Let any one peruſe the eighth and tenth chapters of the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, and ſee if I have not repreſented the caſe fairly. Can any one then ſuppoſe, that the apoſtles, elders, and brethren, would treat the Gentile brethren of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, in this manner? I think no man can ſuppoſe it, that either conſiders the character of the apoſtles, or the vaſt tenderneſs and reſpect with which they appear to treat the Gentile brethren on this occaſion. If the meaning of the apoſtles had been this, namely, "In anſwer to your deſire to know

"our

" our ſenſe, whether all Gentile chriſtians " are obliged to ſubmit to all Moſes's law; " we tell you, that you muſt abſtain from " things offered to idols, &c. only whilſt the " converſion of heathens is a new thing; leſt " they ſhould be drawn, or draw others, to " idolatry; or leſt they ſhould be thought to " be idolaters ſtill;" as Spencer would have it. Would they not firſt have ſaid, " No, " you are not obliged by Moſes's law?" Not only good ſenſe requires it (for without this, the ſuppoſed enthymem is a meer riddle); but eſpecially their tenderneſs for the Gentile chriſtians: leſt the zealots ſhould have occaſion, from their ſilence, to have urged the conformity of all chriſtians to the law. Was there no danger of giving too much countenance to this notion, when the falſe brethren were urging the vigour of the law ſo ſtrenuouſly, and ſpying into the full liberty of the idolatrous Gentiles converted to chriſtianity, which Paul kept from them, and revealed only to the three chief apoſtles; for fear of the ill effects of a furious oppoſition from them, if they had known it[c]? Sure it had been neceſſary firſt to have ſecured this point, and then, if needs muſt, to have added, " but, " leſt ill conſequences ſhould enſue from too " great an uſe of your liberty, abſtain from

[c] Gal. ii. 2.

" theſe

"theſe four things at preſent:" and then have added thoſe reaſons to enforce their advice, ſo ingeniouſly contrived by Spencer; and in which the whole force of that advice muſt have lain.

But Spencer's hypotheſis is not only entirely unſupported from the text, and againſt ſome hints in it, from the then ſtate of things; but directly againſt St. Paul's expreſs aſſertions elſewhere. For ſo far is he from telling the Corinthians, that they muſt not uſe any meats or drinks that had been offered to idols, becauſe they are the enticements, the concomitants and marks of idolatry, and therefore to be abſtained from in that early age of the chriſtian religion; that he allows the Corinthians to eat meat offered to the idols, which was ſold in the ſhambles [d], and at private tables [e], and even in the idols temple [f]; and only forbids the uſe of them in profeſſed honour and worſhip of an idol [g]; in caſe of hardening an idolater [h]; or in caſe of ſcandal to weak chriſtians [i]: which ſingle conſideration alone deſtroys Spencer's ſcheme. But I ſhall ſpeak more fully to this point under the IXth head. Theſe abſtinences therefore cannot be called neceſſary to any Gentile chriſtian, on theſe reaſons, or on any other,

[d] 1 Cor. iv. 25.
[e] Ver. 27—31.
[f] Ibid. viii. 10.
[g] Ibid. x. 7—23.
[h] Ver. 28.
[i] Ibid. viii. 9—13.

but only that of their being enjoined by Moſes's law to ſome Gentiles; namely, the proſelytes of the gate: ſo that the church of Jeruſalem adviſes the proſelytes, who were become chriſtians, againſt the uſe of thoſe things which were forbidden to them by the law of Moſes, but not againſt the uſe of thoſe things which, however they might be forbidden to the Jews, were allowed them; as ſwines fleſh, or any of the other unclean meats forbidden by that law to the Jews, but not to the proſelytes of the gate. Nor do they decree againſt the uſe of any thing that died of itſelf, or that was torn of beaſts (though the blood was in a thing that died of itſelf altogether as much as in that that was ſtrangled, and in that which was torn by beaſts perhaps almoſt as much), becauſe that was not forbidden to a proſelyte of the gate by the law of Moſes [k].

VI. This is the only hypotheſis that makes the anſwer given by the church of Jeruſalem to the queſtion ſent from the brethren of the Gentiles in Antioch, &c. expreſs, direct, ſimple, and pertinent; or that makes the queſtion and anſwer *ad idem*. The queſtion is, "Are "the Gentiles that are now converted to "chriſtianity, in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia "(or, in other words, are the proſelytes of the "gate converted to chriſtianity, in Antioch,

[k] Lev. xvii. 15. Deut. xiv. 21.

"Syria,

" Syria, and Cilicia), bound by Moſes's law?" The anſwer, as it is repreſented by ſome, is, " All Gentile chriſtians are bound by the law " of nature to abſtain from pollutions of idols, " things ſtrangled, blood, and fornication." As it is repreſented by others, it is, " All " Gentile Chriſtians are bound by the ſeven " precepts of Noah, to abſtain from them." Again, as it is repreſented by others, it is, " All Gentile chriſtians are bound to abſtain " from them by rules of chriſtian prudence, " whilſt ſuch a ſtate of things laſts." Whereas, as nothing of all this is ever mentioned or hinted at in the anſwer; ſo it can never be made to relate to the queſtion (as any one may eaſily perceive) but by a very remote implication, and that not without great learning; and at laſt appears too laboured for truth. Let any one read Spencer's Diſſertation on this decree, and ſee if it does not appear ſo to him; though it is ſet off to the greateſt advantage by that able writer. Whereas, if the anſwer be this, " The proſe- " lytes of the gate are bound by thoſe laws " of Moſes after their converſion to chriſtia- " nity by which they were bound before, " and by no others;" it is the moſt clear, ſimple, expreſs, and pertinent, that could poſſibly be given to the queſtion.

VII. But it will put it paſt doubt, that the decree related only to the proſelytes of the gate

gate converted to chriſtianity, if it appears that the converſion of the idolatrous Gentiles was not known at Jeruſalem at the time of this decree. I have ſaid a good deal, that may ſerve to this purpoſe, in the Third Eſſay; but I will repeat ſome things here that I ſaid there (they being very material to my view at preſent) rather than give the leaſt interruption to the thoughts of the reader, by turning him thither; where what I have ſaid, that is to my preſent purpoſe, is applied to another.

St. Paul tells the Galatians, that, at this time of his going up to Jeruſalem, "he "went up by revelation," or ſpecial direction (that is, to himſelf immediately, or to ſome in the church of Antioch); and, as I think is plainly implied, to communicate the goſpel which he preached to the Gentiles (that is, the faith of Chriſt, with an entire freedom from all the laws of Moſes, which I have proved to be the meaning of the Gentile goſpel in the Second Eſſay), to the three chief apoſtles, James, Peter, and John; though but only privately to them, "leſt by any means "he ſhould run, or had run, in vain;" that is, leſt the furious oppoſition, that would have been given him by the Jewiſh chriſtians, bigoted to their own law, and violently ſet againſt the idolatrous Gentiles (to whom they would not ſo much as have Chriſt preached, even after this; as St. Paul tells the Theſſa-

Theſſalonians[l]; leſt, I ſay, this perverſeneſs of the Jewiſh chriſtians ſhould have raiſed an oppoſition to the preaching the goſpel to the idolatrous Gentiles[m], and have been a means of obſtructing the propagation of the goſpel among the Jewiſh believers, or an occaſion of their apoſtacy from it. But whether there was any revelation that Paul ſhould communicate his goſpel to theſe three apoſtles, and them only, or no, as well as to go up to Jeruſalem; yet it is certain, that he acquaints the Galatians, that in fact he did at this time firſt communicate that goſpel to theſe three apoſtles, and to them alone; or, which is the ſame thing, that he communicated it to them privately: the words are, Ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν καὶ ἀνεθέμεν αὐτοῖς, ſcil. ἀπόστολοις, of whom he had before ſpoken[n]; or τοῖς δοκοῦσι, which immediately follows. For there is nothing elſe that αὐτοῖς can refer to, either of any thing that goes before, or follows after. For "them" can never be referred to Jeruſalem[o]; and the ſenſe muſt be, "and I communicated to "them," namely, the apoſtles, "the goſpel "which I preach among the Gentiles, but "to them that were of reputation (only), pri-"vately;" or elſe the ſenſe muſt be, "and I "communicated to them (namely, which "were of reputation) the goſpel, which I

[l] 1 Theſſ. ii. 16.
[m] Gal. ii. 1—11.
[n] Chap. i. 17, 19.
[o] Ibid. ii. 1.

"preach among the Gentiles; but privately "to theſe perſons of reputation, leſt &c." And it is conſequently neceſſarily implied, that he then carefully kept it from all others; and particularly from "thoſe falſe brethren, "who were unawares brought in to this "aſſembly, and came in privately, to ſpy out "the (fuller) liberty which we" (that is, you Galatians under the predicament of idolatrous Gentiles) "have in Chriſt Jeſus: "that they might bring us" (that is, you and all thoſe idolatrous Gentiles) "into bon-"dage again;" by raiſing the fury of the Jewiſh believers againſt this full liberty, which they are not yet able to bear; and of which perhaps theſe falſe brethren had then got ſome ſort of intimation, or ſuſpicion. Now it is ſcarce conceivable, that Paul ſhould declare the converſion of the idolatrous Gentiles to the whole church; and declare the goſpel that he preached to thoſe Gentiles only to the three chief apoſtles. If he had declared the converſion of the idolatrous Gentiles to the whole church, how could he have well avoided to communicate the goſpel that he preached to them? Would it not have been aſked, either by friends or foes, by the more bigoted or the more moderate, what he preached to them? Particularly would it not have been aſked by thoſe "falſe "brethren unawares brought in" (to this aſ-

ſembly),

ſembly), "who came in privately, to ſpy out "this full liberty, which we" (Galatians, that is, idolatrous Gentiles) "have in Chriſt "Jeſus:" (to the intent) that "they might "bring us into bondage?" And how then could Paul and Barnabas have avoided anſwering their queſtion? Or if they had made no anſwer, not anſwering had been confeſſing. Whereas we may be ſure, that Paul, who took ſo much care not to impart his goſpel, for fear of the moſt miſchievous conſequences, would certainly avoid that which (I think I may ſay) muſt neceſſarily have led to the divulging of it.

And methinks, if Paul and Barnabas had declared the converſion of the idolatrous Gentiles, and had been ſo underſtood by the church of Jeruſalem, we ſhould have had ſome account of the great aſtoniſhment and exultation with which it had been received by the reaſonable; and of the fury with which it had been received by the falſe and the bigoted part of the church. What expoſtulations would it have produced in this aſſembly, if they then had it to ſay, that Paul and Barnabas converſed with the idolatrous Gentiles? Theſe were effects which the firſt news of a leſs remarkable event produced: namely, the converſion of the devout Gentiles, and on the terms on which Paul converſed with them, and offered peace and reconciliation to them. For firſt they expoſtulated upon it with Pe-

ter; and when they heard the matter fully, they held their peace, and glorified God; ſaying, with aſtoniſhment and joy, "Then hath "God alſo unto the Gentiles granted repen-"tance unto life[p]." Whereas St. Luke drops no hint of any emotion of this kind in either of the two parties in this whole chapter.

And that the time of St. Paul's being preſent at this debate is the very time that he ſpeaks of communicating his goſpel to the three apoſtles only[q], is plain from hence; that he ſays it was "fourteen years after" (that is, his converſion[r]), which was ann. 35; and was therefore the time of his being preſent at this debate, namely, ann. 49[s]. And as St. Paul does in effect acquaint the Galatians, that he did not impart the news of his converting the idolatrous Gentiles at this time of his being at Jeruſalem to the elders or the church, ſince he ſays he communicated the goſpel of the Gentiles only to the three apoſtles privately; ſo St. Luke ſeems to me to intimate plainly, that he firſt imparted it to the elders of the church of Jeruſalem, together with the account of this converting the idolatrous Gentiles, the fifth time of his being there[t]. St. Paul had told the Galatians, that he communicated his goſpel

[p] Acts x. 18.
[q] Gal. ii. 2.
[r] Ver. 1.
[s] See the Abſtract.
[t] Acts xxi. 17, 18, 19.

"only

" only to the three chief apoſtles;" and St. Luke ſays [u], having his eye perhaps to this very account of St. Paul's to the Galatians, " And the day following, Paul went in with " us unto James, and all the elders were pre- " ſent; and — declared particularly what " things God had wrought among the Gen- " tiles by his miniſtry." And then the ſacred hiſtorian adds, that they received this account in a manner ſuitable to ſo great an event: for " when they heard it," St. Luke ſays, " they " glorified the Lord;" the very words he uſed to expreſs the joy and aſtoniſhment, with which the believing Jews at Jeruſalem received the firſt news of the converſion of the devout Gentiles [w]; and the very expreſſion which St. Paul makes uſe of to the Corinthians; foreſeeing how this news would be received by the church of Jeruſalem; when he ſays (ſpeaking of their contributions that he was at that time juſt coming to them to receive, and then to carry to the poor ſaints in Judæa), " For the adminiſtration of " this ſervice not only ſupplieth the want " of the ſaints, but is, or will be, abundant " alſo by many thankſgivings unto God, " whilſt, by the experiment of this miniſtra- " tion, they (ſhall now firſt) glorify God for " your profeſſed ſubjection unto the goſpel " of Chriſt, and for your liberal diſtribution

[u] Acts xxi. 18, 19. [w] Ibid. xi. 18.

"unto them [x]." This agreement of expreſſion between St. Paul in his epiſtle to the Corinthians, and St. Luke in his hiſtory, is the more conſiderable, becauſe St. Luke was with St. Paul when he wrote that epiſtle to the Corinthians; and may from thence be ſuppoſed to have made uſe of this expreſſion in his hiſtory, from St. Paul's having uſed it in that epiſtle. And then gave St. Paul their advice, how to clear himſelf from a calumny, that ſeems to have ſprung up with the firſt news that had reached the church at Jeruſalem, of his teaching the idolatrous Gentiles [y]. And I think it the more probable, that the converſion of idolatrous Gentiles, and the goſpel that he preached to them, were not known before to the church of Jeruſalem; becauſe James ſpeaks of this decree (which I hope I have proved related to the proſelytes of the gate converted to chriſtianity) as the only thing that the church of Jeruſalem had known, until then, relating to Gentile converts. "As to the Gentiles which believe," ſays he, "we have written and concluded, "that they obſerve no ſuch things" (that is, the law and cuſtoms [z]), "ſave only that they "keep themſelves from things offered to "idols, and from blood, and from things "ſtrangled, and from fornication [a]."

[x] 2 Cor. ix. 12, 13. [y] Ver. 21—26.
[z] Ver. 21. [a] Ver. 5. See the Third Eſſay.

I am

I am well aware of an exception of great weight that lies againſt this opinion, from its being ſaid, that Paul and Barnabas declared the converſion of the Gentiles, as they went through Phœnice and Samaria, on their journey from Antioch to Jeruſalem [b], and that they declared to the church of Jeruſalem "all "(or the) things that God had done with "them." Yet both theſe expreſſions are general, and may be referred to, or at leaſt might be underſtood of, the proſelyted Gentiles only; there being nothing that ſhould neceſſarily oblige us to refer them to idolatrous Gentiles, or make the church of Jeruſalem underſtand it of them. For that Gentiles in ſcripture ſometimes ſignifies proſelytes of the gate, is plain from the Acts [c]. And as the church of Jeruſalem had had their thoughts much exerciſed about theſe proſelyted converts in the caſe of Cornelius; in the firſt converſion of them at Antioch, by the men of Cyprus and Cyrene; in ſending Barnabas thither; and now in this queſtion being brought from them, by Paul and Barnabas and others; it is very likely, that whatever Paul and Barnabas declared about the Gentiles, if they did declare any thing that in fact, and in their own intention, related to the idolatrous Gentiles; yet, expreſſing them-

[b] Acts xv. 3.

[c] Chap. x. 45. xi. 1. 18. and ſome few other places.

ſelves in general terms, the church of Jeruſalem underſtood them as if they had ſpoken of proſelyted Gentiles only, and of the great ſucceſs which they had had among them, at Antioch, and in Syria, Cilicia, or in other places[d]: and I am the more inclined to think that Paul and Barnabas were then underſtood to ſpeak of their ſucceſs among the proſelyted Gentiles only[e], becauſe it immediately follows, that, on the church's receiving this account, "there roſe up certain of the ſect "of the Phariſees which believed, ſaying, "that it was needful to circumciſe them, and "to command them to keep the law of Moſes[f];" which, as I have proved before, was natural enough for them to contend for in relation to the proſelyted Gentiles converted to chriſtianity; but not ſo likely for them to contend for in relation to the idolatrous Gentiles, at leaſt in the firſt inſtance[g].

There is another exception to which this matter is liable. John ſurnamed Mark went with Saul and Barnabas, whoſe nephew he was, from Jeruſalem; and he was miniſter to them, when they converted Sergius Paulus at Paphos in Cyprus; and there left them, and returned to Jeruſalem. Now it will be thought difficult to ſuppoſe that he ſhould not be acquainted with the commiſſion

[d] See the Preface. [e] Ver. 3, 4.
[f] Ver. 5. [g] See Eſſay III. and the Preface.

Paul

Paul and Barnabas had received at Antioch in Syria. And it is certain he was with them at the converſion of Sergius Paulus: and it will be thought therefore highly probable, that he ſhould know of this commiſſion, and that he ſhould impart the news of the commiſſion, and the converſion of Sergius Paulus, to the church of Jeruſalem, or to ſome of them, at leaſt to Peter (whoſe miniſter he was) on his return. To this I anſwer in the firſt place in the general, that all that at moſt can be argued from all this is, that becauſe Mark knew this news, he might probably acquaint others at Jeruſalem with it. But ſure this probability cannot be of equal weight with the poſitive evidence that has been given that they were not acquainted with it. But to be a little more particular. 1. Though Mark knew of the commiſſion, which the Holy Ghoſt notified to the church of Antioch by the prophets, that Chriſt had given them, to go to the idolatrous Gentiles; yet the goſpel he was to preach to them might not be made known to the church, either by thoſe prophets, or by Saul, or any other way. 2. Though Mark was preſent at the converſion of Sergius Paulus, yet Saul and Barnabas do not ſeem to go to Sergius Paulus in execution of the commiſſion they had received at Antioch in Syria, but upon being ſent for to him.

him[h]. They do not ſeem to have opened their commiſſion till they come to Antioch in Piſidia. It may be, they did not know themſelves when they were to open that commiſſion, and waited for further directions from Providence, or freſh revelation[i]. The converſion of one ſingle idolatrous Gentile, who ſent for Barnabas and Saul, would not of itſelf notify the ſubſequent converſions of idolatrous Gentiles to Mark, any more than the converſion of the Syrophœnician woman gave the diſciples occaſion to think that the Gentiles ſhould in great numbers be made the diſciples of Chriſt afterwards: and it is probable that the deputy only was converted; we do not read that any of his family or friends were, as we are informed was the caſe of Cornelius. 3. Though Mark knew of this commiſſion, and of the converſion of Sergius Paulus, and if he knew of the goſpel he was to preach in purſuance of it, yet he might conceal it from others, either by direction of the Spirit, or by directions from Saul and Barnabas, or from prudential conſiderations of his own.

I would not conceal any difficulty of conſequence, that has occurred to my own thoughts; but, after propoſing it, and what has taken off the weight of it with me, leave

[h] Acts xiii. 7.

[i] See ſuch revelation Acts xvi. 7. 9. xxiii. 11. Gal. ii. 2.

it

it to the reader to judge of the evidence. And therefore I will mention an exception, that ſtopped me a little from fully entertaining this notion: which is, that Titus, who was a Greek (Ἕλλην ὢν), or a Gentile, went up with Paul and Barnabas to Jeruſalem, as he informs us [k]; and probably from Antioch (ſince others went up with them from Antioch thither [l]); and that Paul ſays, "he would not "ſuffer him to be circumciſed." It may then be ſaid, If Paul carried him to Jeruſalem, and eſpecially if he carried him up thither from Antioch, and would not ſuffer him to be circumciſed; did not Paul then acquaint the church of Jeruſalem, or at leaſt muſt not the church of Jeruſalem have neceſſarily known, the converſion of the idolatrous Gentiles from the caſe of Titus? Yes. They muſt certainly have known it, if Titus's being a Greek was the ſame thing with ſaying that he was an idolatrous Gentile. But he might be a Greek or a Gentile, though he was alſo a proſelyte of the gate; in which ſenſe Ἕλλην and Ἕλληνες ſometimes occurr [m]. So that I am as much at liberty to ſuppoſe him a proſelyted Gentile, as any body can be to ſuppoſe him an idolatrous one; unleſs ſomething occurr elſewhere to hint his being an

[k] Gal. ii. 2. [l] Acts xv. 2.

[m] John xii. 20. Acts xi. 20. xiv. 1, 2. xviii. 4. See Mill. in loc.

idolatrous

idolatrous Gentile; which I have not met with.

Nay, I think there is not a bare ſilence in this caſe, but ſome hint of his being a proſelyted Gentile. Paul, as I have already mentioned, tells the Galatians, that he took Titus up with him to Jeruſalem [n]; and, as I have already ſaid, in all probability, from Antioch. And then it will not be thought improbable, that Titus was one of thoſe which are mentioned to have been ſent up with Paul and Barnabas by the church of Antioch to Jeruſalem [o]. And if he was one of thoſe that was ſent up with Paul and Barnabas, he was likely to be one of thoſe very proſelytes whom the queſtion concerned; ſome of which were very proper, and therefore very likely to have been ſent up with Barnabas and Paul. Paul was the more likely to take him up with him, he being his own ſon [p], that is, one that was converted by Paul, and not improbably at Antioch [q]. And though Paul ſays he took him with him, that will be no more a proof that he was not ſent by the church of Antioch, than it is a proof that St. Paul was not ſent by that church becauſe he ſays "he went up by "revelation [r]. Paul might be ſent up to Jeruſalem by the church, and directed by God

[n] Gal. ii. 1.
[o] Acts xv. 2.
[p] Tit. i. 4.
[q] See the Abſtract.
[r] Gal. ii. 2.

to

to go up thither too. And Titus might be ſent by the church of Antioch at Paul's inſtance and deſire. And if the thoughts I have given of St. Paul's communicating his goſpel to the three apoſtles only, and keeping it ſecret at that time from the reſt, eſpecially from the falſe brethren that came maliciouſly to ſpy it out, and the reaſons of that conduct have any thing in them, Titus muſt have been a proſelyte of the gate, or the ſecret muſt in all probability have been fully known.

I do not pretend to prove Titus to have been a proſelyte of the gate from the place where Grotius, Dr. Mill, and others, think Titus is meant[s]; as I ſuppoſe Chryſoſtom did before: becauſe, if Titus ought to be read there before Juſtus, as Grotius thinks, or if Juſtus ought not to be read there, but Titus only, as Dr. Mill thinks, yet it cannot be this Titus that went up with Paul to Jeruſalem. For Juſtus is there deſcribed as a proſelyte of the gate, "one that "worſhiped God" (τινὸς ὀνόματι Ἰάσου σεβομένου τὸν Θεὸν), which falls in the year 52; whereas Titus who went up with Paul to Jeruſalem was a convert to the chriſtian religion at the time of the decree at Jeruſalem, and went up from Antioch with Paul upon that queſtion[t]. And ſo exact a writer as Luke would never have deſcribed a proſelyte of the gate converted to chriſtianity in 49, only under

[s] Acts xviiii. 7. [t] Gal. ii. 2. Ann. 49.

the

the lower character of a proſelyte of the gate in 52, inſtead of that of one of the diſciples, brethren, chriſtians, or believers.

If it ſhould be farther urged, to prove Titus an idolatrous Gentile, that Paul tells the Galatians, that he would not ſuffer Titus to be circumciſed, or that Titus was not compelled to be circumciſed — "that the truth of the "goſpel might continue with the Galatians" (idolatrous Gentiles); I do not ſee any weight in that objection neither: for it tended as much to preſerve the truth of the goſpel with the Galatians, to keep Titus from being circumciſed, if he was a proſelyte, as if he had been an idolatrous Gentile. For if he, being a proſelyted Gentile, had been circumciſed; the neceſſity of circumciſion to a man not obliged to it by the law of the country (where he was born or lived) had been eſtabliſhed; which had then eſtabliſhed circumciſion as a religious, and not continued it barely as a civil rite; and muſt have given it the place of the terms on which a man was to obtain juſtification and eternal life. It muſt conſequently have entirely deſtroyed the liberty of the goſpel, and have made it altogether as neceſſary for an idolatrous Gentile to be circumciſed on his converſion to chriſtianity, as for a proſelyted one.

VIII. I think this hypotheſis likewiſe recommends itſelf extremely, becauſe it makes

this decree agreeable to the very firſt notions of chriſtianity; to the methods by which chriſtianity was propagated in the world in all other inſtances; and to the principal characters that are given of it in ſcripture.

Nothing is plainer than that, Chriſt's kingdom being not of this world, his doctrine and laws could make no alteration in mens civil ſtate and condition; but muſt leave all men, in that reſpect, as it found them. It would otherwiſe have been unjuſtifiable in itſelf, and not capable of being received in the world; ſince it was not to be eſtabliſhed by the ſword. Now this hypotheſis goes entirely on that bottom. The decree, in my ſenſe of it, only declaring the opinion of thoſe who made it, to thoſe to whom they ſent it, that chriſtianity did not alter the condition of the proſelytes of the gate, in reſpect of their civil obligations, or privileges; but that, as they were bound by theſe laws of Moſes before their converſion, ſo they were after.

And this maxim the apoſtles conſtantly go upon in all other caſes. For he that is ſubject to heathen powers muſt be ſo ſtill [t]; he that is called being a ſervant muſt not care for it [w]; he that is married muſt not ſeek to be looſed [x]; chriſtian parents muſt love heathen children, and chriſtian children muſt obey heathen parents [y]; chriſtian

[t] Rom. xiii. 1—7. [w] 1 Cor. vii. 2.
[x] Ver. 27. [y] Eph. vi. 1, 5.

huſbands

huſbands and wives muſt continue ſo to heathen wives and huſbands [z]; chriſtian ſervants muſt obey heathen maſters, chriſtian maſters muſt be kind to heathen ſervants [a]: for this, I think, is the meaning of thoſe commands given to the Gentile chriſtians in ſo many of St. Paul's epiſtles, and in the firſt of St. Peter's [b]. Farther; he that, as a Jew, was bound by all the Jewiſh laws as the laws of his country, remained ſo ſtill; as the heathen or idolatrous Gentiles, who were never bound by them, remained entirely free. "Is any "man called being circumciſed? let him "not become uncircumciſed. Is any "called in uncircumciſion? let him not be "circumciſed. Let every man abide in the "calling wherein he is called [c]." And I am apt to think, that it was on the account that Chriſt's kingdom was not to alter any of the Jewiſh laws, that Chriſt bids his diſciples pray, that there might be no occaſion for their flight on a ſabbath day before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem [d], that ſo the law and cuſtom of the Jews, which prevented their travelling on a ſabbath day above a ſabbath day's journey [e], might prevent their providing for their ſafety by flight. It was indeed an accuſation brought by the Jews of Aſia,

[z] 1 Cor. vii. 10—17.
[a] Eph. vi. 5—29.
[b] 1 Pet. ii. 13—18.
[c] 1 Cor. vii. 18, 20.
[d] Matt. xxiv. 20.
[e] Ibid.

againſt

againſt St. Paul, that "he taught all men "every where againſt the people, and "the law, and the temple." But it was a falſe accuſation; and one that was ſo injurious to him, that, by the advice of James and all the elders, he was to ſhew by a vow (the only voluntary part of the Jewiſh polity) that he did not teach the Jews which were among the Gentiles to forſake "Moſes, cir-"cumciſion, and the cuſtoms; but that he "himſelf walked orderly," as one, who acknowledged himſelf ſubject to the law and the common uſage of the Jews (not indeed as the law of the kingdom which God had ſet up under Chriſt in the world, but as the law of God, as King and Governor of the Jewiſh nation); and that he kept the law accordingly. He therefore ſays, "He went up "to Jeruſalem for to worſhip; and that the "Jews of Aſia found him purified in the tem-"ple [f];" and afterwards aſſerts, "that he had "not offended againſt the law [g]." Thus, "unto the Jews, he became a Jew; and to "them that are under the law, as under the "law" (as by preaching the Gentile goſpel he became ſo without the law, as a Jew being without the law); being, as a Jew, according to the Chriſtian religion itſelf, as much ſubject to the higher powers of Judæa,

[f] Acts xxiv. 11, 18. [g] Ibid. xxv. 8. xxvii. 17.

as the Romans were to thoſe of Rome[h]. On this account it was, that Timothy was circumciſed, being a Jew, his mother being a Jeweſs, tho' his father was a Greek[i]. For "Partus ſequitur ventrem" was then a certain maxim among the Jews as well as the Romans[k]; whilſt St. Paul would not allow Titus a Greek to be circumciſed, and declares in the ſtrongeſt terms to the Galatians who were Gentiles, that "if ye be circumciſed, "Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing," is become of no effect to you, for that "ye are fallen "from grace[l]." If the Jewiſh Chriſtians had ſubmitted to the law of Moſes otherwiſe than as to the civil law of their country, I do not ſee but ſubmitting to it muſt have been as fatal to their ſouls as to the ſouls of the Galatians. Thus therefore we ſee this precept ſtrictly purſued by St. Paul, that if they were Jews and ſubject to the law, they were to remain Jews and ſubject to the law; and if Gentiles, or free from the law, they were to continue Gentiles, or free from it.

And tho' the occaſion did not lead St. Paul here to add, "Art thou called a proſelyte of "the gate? continue a proſelyte of the gate;" yet his reaſoning holds as ſtrong in the caſe of the proſelytes of the gate, for their conti-

[h] Acts xxi. 28, 30. [i] Ibid. xvi. 1.
[k] See Seld. de Jur. &c. l. v. c. 15.
[l] Gal. v. 2, 4.

nuing ſo, as it does in the caſe of the Jews, or of the idolatrous Gentiles.

Conſider Gal. ii. 12, 14. as an objection to this: "Peter eat with the Gentiles, and lived "after the manner of the Gentiles." Anſwer: Eating with the Gentiles is perhaps only a proverbial ſpeech, ſignifying to converſe with them [m]; but does not neceſſarily ſignify eating unclean meats, which they did. This is confirmed by Gal. ii. 12. that "when the "Jews came, Peter ſeparated and withdrew." It ſhould ſeem therefore that, by eating, converſing and living familiarly is the only thing that is meant, ſince that which is oppoſed to it is ſeparating and withdrawing. Hereby they treated them as unclean, as they were not righteous by the law. This was contrary to the truth of the goſpel which he had preached to Cornelius. The tendency of this practice was to induce them to think, that juſtification was by the works of the law, and not by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt, which was deſtroying the things he had built; and, being contrary to his own perſuaſion, which was, "that a man was to be juſtified by faith, and "not by the works of the law," was a groſs diſſimulation and hypocriſy, and well deſerved the reprimand Paul gave him. But, 2dly, if eating with the Gentiles and living after the

[m] Luke xv. 1. See Acts xi. 3.

manner of the Gentiles ſignifies laying aſide all obſervance of Moſes's laws about eating, yet Peter is not here juſtified for that, but only blamed that he, who had gone ſuch a length in laying aſide all regard to the law, before the decree came from James, ſhould now go to the other extreme, and entirely withdraw and ſeparate from all communion and converſation with them; and Paul might mention both theſe extremes, to ſhew Peter's inconſiſtency and prevarication the more glaringly. If it be ſaid, But why did not Paul tell the Galatians that he blamed the laying aſide all regard for the law, if that was blameworthy, as well as withdrawing afterwards? I anſwer, Becauſe it was beſide his purpoſe; which was, not to blame Peter, but to juſtify himſelf, and ſhew the Galatians, that he was uniform in his preaching to the Gentiles a freedom from Moſes's law; and that he did not promiſe any other goſpel to the Gentiles than what he had preached to them, as had been inſinuated of him [n]. And he blames Peter no farther to the Galatians than was neceſſary to his own defence. For this reaſon, he here blames Peter for running from one extreme to the other; but does not blame him for the firſt extreme.

The principal characters, and the very genius of the Chriſtian religion, is an entire

[n] Gal. i. 8.

freedom

freedom from the law of Moſes, and a reaſonable ſervice; that is, (as far as this is concerned) a ſervice which does not debar us from any thing that has not a moral turpitude in it, or at leaſt that is not too baſe and mean for a man who has the revelation of a ſpiritual, glorious, and immortal life in the world to come. Now the explication I have given of this decree agrees perfectly with theſe characters; for it ſhews, that theſe abſtinences which are here enjoined are only enjoined on proſelytes of the gate converted to the Chriſtian faith, in virtue of the obedience they owed to the civil law of Paleſtine.

IX. I think this hypotheſis recommends itſelf no leſs to us, becauſe it entirely reconciles this decree, not only with St. Paul's entire ſilence about it to the idolatrous Gentiles in all his epiſtles (which would be altogether unaccountable, if the decree related to any Gentile Chriſtians but proſelyted ones), but with ſeveral of his moſt expreſs declarations in thoſe epiſtles, which are utterly inconſiſtent with any ſcheme that makes the decree relate to idolatrous Gentile Chriſtians: for he ſays, that "nothing is "unclean of itſelf[o];" and aſſerts with the greateſt aſſurance imaginable, "I know and

[o] Rom. xiv. 14, 20.

" am perſuaded by the Lord Jeſus, that there " is nothing unclean of itſelf; but only to him " that eſteemeth it to be unclean, it is un- " clean:" and ſays this in oppoſition to thoſe who thought they muſt only eat herbs, leſt they ſhould eat of meats that had been offered to idols, tho' they did not know thoſe meats had been ſo offered; the Gentiles eating nothing that had not been ſome way or other offered to an idol. He, on the contrary, declares himſelf of the opinion of thoſe who thought they might eat all things [p], unleſs in the caſe of offence: which ſhews that it was a matter lawful in every caſe but the excepted one. Nay, he ſays, that " the Spirit ſpeaketh " expreſſly of ſeducers that will ariſe, com- " manding to abſtain from meats, which God " has created to be received with thankſgiving " of them which believe and know the truth. " For," he adds, " every creature of God is " good, and nothing to be refuſed, if it be " received with thankſgiving; for it is ſancti- " fied by the word of God and prayer [q]." He likewiſe tells Titus (who had been up with him at Jeruſalem at the making of this decree), that he ſhould oppoſe " the unruly and vain " talkers, eſpecially of the circumciſion," among the Cretans [r]; " thoſe vain talkers of " the circumciſion, who ſubvert whole houſes,

[p] Rom. xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 17. [q] 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4, 5.
[r] Tit. i. 10, 11.

" teaching

"teaching for doctrines Jewiſh fables, and "commandments of men, that turn from the "truth;" as thoſe did [s], who "ſubverted the "ſouls" of the proſelyted Gentile Chriſtians at Antioch, by inſiſting on their being circumciſed, without any ſuch commandment from the apoſtles. And Titus, in oppoſition to their Jewiſh fables and commandments of men, is to teach the Cretans (idolatrous Gentiles converted to the faith), "that to the "pure all things are pure [t]:" all things without diſtinction; even things offered to idols, things ſtrangled, and blood. And he yet more expreſſly tells the Corinthians, not only that they may "buy things offered to "idols, in the ſhambles, and eat them in pri-"vate houſes [u];" but ſuppoſes it to be lawful to eat "meats offered to idols in the idol's "temple" (the higheſt inſtance of the very pollutions of idols declared in the decree to be forbidden to the proſelytes of the gate), unleſs it ſhould offend. For he calls this eating in the idol's temple "liberty and knowledge;" and allows the reaſoning on which the practice was founded to be good: but only ſays, they muſt not uſe this liberty to offend. Which ſhews plainly, that the eating things offered to idols, and even in an idol's temple, was a thing lawful or indifferent out of that

[s] Acts xv. 24. [t] Ver. 15.
[u] 1 Cor. x. 25, 27.

caſe[w]; it being only by actions, otherwiſe lawful or indifferent, that we can give offence.

But, on my hypotheſis, all this inconſiſtency and contradiction vaniſhes; ſince it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe that St. Paul would have quoted a decree to the idolatrous Gentiles converted to chriſtianity, in the epiſtles that he wrote to them, that did not at all concern them. And there can be no ſhadow of a contradiction between a prohibition, in the xvth of the Acts, to converted proſelytes of the gate, on account of a civil law of Judæa, to which they were ſubject before their converſion, and from which their converſion could not releaſe them; and the liberty expreſſly aſſerted to belong to the idolatrous converted Gentiles, in theſe declarations of his, in his epiſtles; who never had been under any ſuch civil law before their converſion to chriſtianity, and could not poſſibly be brought under ſuch a law by their converſion to it.

I am aware, that it may be objected againſt this hypotheſis, that ſome words occurr in this letter from the church of Jeruſalem "to the "brethren in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia[x]," which ſeem to reſtrain it to the idolatrous Gentiles; namely, the words which theſe falſe brethren taught at Antioch (of the neceſſity

[w] 1 Cor. viii. 4—8. [x] Ver. 24.

of

of circumciſion, and obeying Moſes's law), being ſaid "to ſubvert their ſouls:" which, perhaps, it will be pretended, ſhews that this relates to idolatrous Gentiles, from a parallel expreſſion which St. Paul uſes to the Galatians (who were idolatrous Gentiles [y]), "that if ye "be circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you no-"thing —— and Chriſt is become of none "effect unto you."

But how does St. Paul explain this aſſertion? His explication comes to this: That if a Gentile would be circumciſed, it was becauſe he thought the Jewiſh religion ſtill in force, or that the laws of Moſes ſtill bound all the people of God, and that obedience to them was the only terms of acceptance with him, and of communion with the Chriſtian church: which was in effect to renounce the terms of juſtification, communion, and ſalvation by Chriſt, and to ſeek to be juſtified by obedience to the law, by which "no fleſh living could "be juſtified [z]." Now will not the ſame reaſoning hold as to a proſelyte of the gate, if he would be circumciſed, or keep other parts of the law of Moſes beſides thoſe few to which he was bound by the law of Moſes, as the condition on which he was to enjoy civil privileges in Paleſtine, whenever he was there; ſince to all other points of the law, he was on the ſame foot with other Gentiles? If he

[y] Gal. v. 2, 4. [z] Ibid. ii. 16.

ſought

ſought to be circumciſed, and would obey all the laws of Moſes, it was not in order to entitle himſelf to the civil privileges of a proſelyte. He was entitled to them without ſuch obedience. He muſt then be circumciſed, and ſubmit to the reſt of the laws of Moſes, as the terms of juſtification and acceptance with God: whereas he did not do any thing of this, while he only obeyed thoſe laws which Moſes gave to the proſelytes of the gate. For he then ſhewed plainly, he only did it to entitle himſelf to the civil privileges of a proſelyte of the gate, whenever he ſojourned in Paleſtine. Juſt as a Jew might be circumciſed, and obey all the laws of Moſes, without being ever thought to renounce chriſtianity, and loſe the benefits of it: a converted Jew declaring no more by that obedience, than a reſolution to continue to ſubmit to the ſame laws of his country to which he ſubmitted before he was converted. And therefore, though St. Paul tells the Galatians, that, if they were circumciſed, Chriſt ſhould profit them nothing, he never ſays any ſuch thing to the Jewiſh converts; but bids them "continue Jews;" that is, obey the laws of their country; but ſtill as the laws of their country. But, if they ſought juſtification and righteouſneſs by them before God, or taught others ſo to do, they then ſhewed themſelves

"ignorant

" ignorant of the righteouſneſs of God [a];" and would, by " building again the things they " had deſtroyed, become tranſgreſſors [b]."

If the hypotheſis I have laid down (and, as I think, proved) be true, it will from thence follow, that the proſelytes of the gate, converted to chriſtianity, could not be obliged to abſtain from theſe four things, by virtue of the law of Moſes, or from this advice founded upon it, longer than while the Jewiſh polity laſted; ſince, it being a civil law of the Jewiſh polity only, that law, and the advice built upon it, muſt drop with all the reſt; which, perhaps, is the reaſon, if the church of Thyatira, to which St. John writes [c], was a church of the Jews (as I have offered ſome obſervations to prove in the Second Eſſay), why the Spirit blames that church for " fornication " and" (things ſacrificed to idols, εἰδωλόθυτα, or things offered to an idol in honour of the idol; that is) " idolatry [d]:" " but will put upon " them none other burthen [e]," not the whole burthen laid in this decree [f]; and therefore does not blame them at all for eating things ſtrangled and blood, or perhaps even things ſacrificed to idols, unleſs they ate them as ſuch, and in honour of the idol to which they had

[a] Rom x. 3.
[b] Gal. ii. 18.
[c] Rev. ii. 18.
[d] Ver. 20.
[e] Ver. 24.
[f] Acts xv. 18.

been

been ſacrificed. And yet things ſtrangled and blood uſed to attend idolatry, as well as the other two, as Spencer has fully proved: and which may therefore, by the way, ſerve as a further objection to his hypotheſis.

There is another objection that lies againſt mine; namely, the ſenſe that the primitive church had of this decree, who regulated their ſentiments and conduct by it, as by a common and ſtanding law of chriſtianity. But, as this is an objection to my hypotheſis only in common with all others, that make it but of a particular and temporary obligation, I ſhall refer my reader to other authors for an anſwer to it: for what will ſerve as an anſwer in their caſe will, in a great meaſure, ſerve in mine. I content myſelf with this the rather, becauſe, whatever deference we pay the fathers or the primitive church in our days in matters of fact, there is little paid them in other matters without the plain evidence of reaſon and ſcripture, much leſs againſt it; their opinions in ſuch caſes (and there are a great many of them) ſerving only to ſhew us, that they were liable to ignorance and error as well as we.

AN

AN

APPENDIX,

BEING

A Paraphraſe and Notes on the XVIIth Chapter of LEVITICUS.

LEVIT. XVII.

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THE law reſtraining every Iſraelite or proſelyte to the Jewiſh religion from killing any ox, ſheep, or goat, any where but at the tabernacle. This law intended to preſerve them from idolatry. Eating of blood, or that which dieth of itſelf, or was torn by beaſts, and things ſtrangled, forbidden, with the reaſons of theſe prohibitions.

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THE law reſtraining every one of the Iſraelitiſh nation or religion, upon pain of death, from eating any ox, ſheep, or goat, that was ſlain any where but at the door of the tabernacle; and whoſe blood had not been ſprinkled, and whoſe fat had not been burnt on the altar, ver. 1—8. This law intended to preſerve them from idolatry, ver. 5—8. This law extended to the ſtranger that ſojourned

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journed among them, ver. 8, 9. Eating of blood forbidden to Iſraelites and ſtrangers ſojourning among them, with the reaſon, ver. 10—12. Things ſtrangled alſo forbidden to them, with the reaſon, ver. 13, 14. Things dying of themſelves, or torn by beaſts, forbidden to the Iſraelites, and the religious proſelytes, only under the penalty of being unclean till they had waſhed themſelves, and till the even; but on the pain of bearing their iniquity on their not ſubmitting to that penalty.

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1 And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes ſaying,

2 Speak unto Aaron and unto his ſons, and unto all the children of Iſrael, and ſay unto them, this is the thing

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Ver. 1, 2, 3, and 4. The foregoing ordinance, relating to the miniſtration of the high-prieſt, in the Holy of Holies, was followed by another; wherein

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the Lord commanded ſaying,

3 What Man ſoever there be of the Houſe of Iſrael [a], that killeth an ox, lamb, or goat [b], in the camp, or that wherein not only Aaron, and his ſons, as the ſacrificers, but all of the Jewiſh nation and religion, or even that lived among them, were concerned.

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[a] Ver. 3. "Of the houſe of Iſrael." I take theſe words to be in oppoſition to the ſtranger that ſojourneth among you, ver. 8. or the proſelytes of the gate; and therefore to include the proſelytes of righteouſneſs, who were Iſraelites, though they were not of Iſrael; Iſraelites by religion and profeſſion, though not by birth. And I take them the rather to be included here, becauſe God ſays, Exod. xii. 49. "One law ſhall be to him "that is home-born, and to him that ſojourneth among "you." N. B. The Septuagint adds here, "Or of "the proſelytes that ſojourn among you."

[b] "That killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat." Theſe words are ſo general as to take in all manner of killing; killing for private uſe, as well as for ſacrifice. And thus ſays, R. Moſes, Mor. Nevoc. p. iii. c. 46. "Becauſe "the Iſraelites were rebellious and contumacious, per-"ſiſted in the wicked cuſtoms in which they were edu-"cated, and made themſelves the companions of devils "by eating round the blood, therefore God commanded, "that all beaſts that were killed ſhould be peace-offer-"ings;" i. e. ſhould be killed before the tabernacle, and their blood ſprinkled, and their fat burnt on the altar.

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killeth it out of the camp [c].

4. And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation of the Lord; blood ſhall be imputed unto that man, he hath ſhed blood; and that

ed. Moſes is directed by God to enact a law by God's authority, that no Iſraelite by nation or religion ſhall kill any beaſt permitted to be offered in ſacrifice to God, as ox, ſheep, or goat, either

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tar. And this I think more fully appears, if with this verſe we compare Deut. xii. 20—28. for there it is declared, that part of the law ſhould be repealed, from the neceſſity of things, when they ſhould come into the promiſed land. And that then they might kill of their herd or of their flock, and eat of it in their gate; if the altar was too far from them. Which ſhews, that they could not even kill to eat, any where but at the door of the tabernacle, whilſt they were in the wilderneſs. And even when they came into the promiſed land, where they might kill for private uſe within their gates; yet the blood, that they were now to pour on the altar, they were then to pour on the ground, as water.

[c] "In the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp." Theſe words ſhew too that this law prohibits the killing beaſts even for private uſe any where but at the door of the tabernacle. The beaſts that were killed at one place (in the camp or at their tents) being for private uſe: as thoſe at the other place (out of the camp) were generally for ſacrifices, before this law.

for

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man ſhall be cut off from among his people:

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for offering, or for private uſe, at any place whatſoever but the tabernacle; and that whoſoever ſhall ſlay any ſuch beaſt even either for private uſe as well as for ſacrifice, at any other place than this ſtated place of worſhip, and ſhall not there offer a part of it to God, ſhall be capitally puniſhed; ſince it is plain he that ſhall break this law will break it in order to offer to devils, and become the very worſt of idolaters. N. B. The Septuagint adds here, "to offer a burnt-"offering, or a peace-"offering."

5 To the end that the children of Iſrael may bring their ſacrifices

Ver. 5. And this I order, to the end that the Iſraelites and the

which they offer in the open field [d], even that religious proſelytes may bring all thoſe beaſts

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[d] Ver. 5. "To the end that the children of Iſrael "may bring their ſacrifices, which they offer in the "open field, even that they may bring them unto the "Lord." — "Sacrifices." The Septuagint uſe here Θυσίας. Theſe words ſhew,

(1.) That they had offered ſacrifices to devils, from the plain oppoſition there is between offering them in the open field and offering them to the Lord. Why is offering to the Lord oppoſed to offering in the open field, unleſs they had offered to devils there, inſtead of offering to the Lord? This appears more plainly from the end of this law, which is only here implied, but more expreſsly ſaid to be to prevent their ſacrificing to devils, ver. 7. and which is plainly implied to have been frequently practiſed by them, ibid. This appears from the very matter of the law. For why ſhould God order all the beaſts that were ſlain even for private uſe to be brought to his tabernacle, and ſlain as it were under his eye, and a part of them to be offered to himſelf, and the blood to be ſprinkled on his altar, but to prevent the pouring out of the blood in the open fields to devils? This alſo appears from the perſons to whom it was extended, ver. 8, 9. namely, the proſelytes of the gate. For why ſhould they be prevented from offering ſacrifices in the open field, and be obliged too to bring them to the door of the tabernacle, and offer part of them as a peace-offering to God, but to prevent idolatry? which in a theocracy was no

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they may bring them beaſts which they uſed

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no more to be ſuffered in the proſelytes of the gate than in the Iſraelites. This likewiſe appears from the penalty annexed to this law, which is capital. And why is blood to be imputed to a man that kills a beaſt in the open fields, and does not bring it to the tabernacle? And why is he to be cut off from his people, but becauſe he that killed a beaſt in the open fields offered it to devils; and that the only effectual way to prevent it was to make them bring them all to the door of the tabernacle, and offer them to God? As Abarbenell obſerves on this place; who, after giving the reaſons of others for this prohibition, gives his own in theſe words: "What ſeems more "probable to me is, that the man that kills ſo" (that is, in the open fields) "is the occaſion that men came and "there eat upon the blood poured out in the fields from "the killing of the beaſts there; which is the worſhip "of devils: and he that killed a beaſt ſo was as if he "had brought death and deſolation among all that ſacri-"ficed in that day." This likewiſe appears from part of this law being temporary. See ver. 7. For why muſt they ſlay all their beaſts for private uſe, and offer the blood and fat to God in the wilderneſs, and not when they came to the promiſed land, but that they were more prone to this idolatry in the wilderneſs, being juſt come out of Egypt; and that they had frequent opportunities of practiſing it in deſarts, where the devils ſhewed themſelves oftener to them than in cities, towns, and well-inhabited places; and that God would take various methods to cure this diſpoſition to idolatry before they came to the promiſed land?

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ſed to ſlay for private uſe, and offer in the open

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2. Theſe words ſhew, that this idolatrous cuſtom had ariſen from their ſacrificing in the open fields; ſince the obliging them to bring all beaſts that they ſlew to the door of the tabernacle would be the effectual cure of this evil.

3. Theſe words point out the manner in which they had ſacrificed to devils in the open fields; namely, by pouring out the blood of the beaſts into an hole made in the ground, and left open for the devils to feaſt on; they taking blood to be their food: whilſt they ſometimes eat the blood near the place, feaſting with the devils, at leaſt as they imagined; as at other times they left the blood for devils, and carried the fleſh to their own tents. This was a way of ſacrificing that they could eaſily make uſe of in any open fields, and on every occaſion, without having any altar to offer it upon, which could not be ſoon or eaſily built or concealed. And that this was the way of ſacrificing, we may learn from the 13th verſe, where the blood of what is caught in hunting muſt be poured out upon the ground, and covered with duſt. For what reaſon, but to put an end to this idolatrous practice? And that this effuſion of the blood, and keeping it together in a hole or little trench, was the very offering to idols, appears from Ezek. xxxiii. 25. "Ye eat with" (it ſhould be "upon") "the blood, and lift up your eyes "unto the idols, and ſhed blood" (becauſe the beaſts ſlain were offered to devils, and not to the Lord, ver. 4.) "Ye ſtand upon your ſword, ye work abomination:" and from Deut. xii. 16, where, though they are releaſed from bringing the blood of all that they killed to God's altar

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open fields to devils (particularly, by pouring

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tar when they ſhould come into the promiſed land, becauſe of its diſtance from their habitations, and are allowed to kill the beaſts for private uſe in all their gates, yet are they commanded not only not to eat blood, but to pour it out upon the earth as water; that is, as a common thing, and not as a thing ſeparated to any idolatrous uſe; and to pour it upon the earth as water, which is poured upon the ſurface, and ſoon ſucked in, but is not carefully collected, and put into an hole or trench of the ground. This is yet more plainly expreſſed in the 13th verſe of this chapter: "He ſhall even pour out the blood "thereof" (carefully and at once, and not barely let it go as water), "but" (carefully) "cover it with the earth;" that is, all the time you continue in the wilderneſs, where the inclination and the opportunities for this idolatry will occurr much oftner than when you come into the promiſed land, by the methods which I ſhall in the mean time take to cure you of this wicked diſpoſition. And thus the author of the book Zohar, one of the moſt ancient of the Jewiſh writers, who, ſpeaking of divers methods of inchantment and magic by which the Egyptians outdid all mankind, ſays, in Levit. fol. 235. "And when the "Egyptians had a mind to have a congregation for per-"forming their magical rites, they went into the open "fields to a high mountain, and killed ſacrifices, and "made a trench in the earth, and ſprinkled blood about "the trench, and got together, and offered their ſacri-"fices to wicked and malignant ſpirits, and contracted "familiarities with them in the mountain. And the Iſ-

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ing out their blood into an open hole or trench

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" raelites, that were in bondage to them, went among " them, and learned from them, and erred after them; " according as it is written, Lev. xvii. 7. *And they ſhall " no more offer their ſacrifices unto goats, after whom " they have gone a whoring.* From this tradition we " learn, that at the time that they went after thoſe wic- " ked ſpirits, and prepared the blood as aforeſaid, and of- " fered them ſacrifices, thoſe wicked ſpirits gathered " themſelves together, and appeared to them as hairy " goats, and revealed to them the things they wanted to " know from them." So likewiſe Joſephus Albo, in Sepher Ikkar, Diſc. iii. c. 16. ſpeaking of the ceremonial or ritual law, ſays, " The killing of beaſts without the " tabernacle was firſt forbid juſt after the Iſraelites were " come out of Egypt; becauſe they were then overrun " with the worſhip of devils, and eat upon the blood, and " eat the blood and the fat;" without all doubt, according to what they had learned in Egypt. And Maimonides, who penetrated farther into the end and meaning of the ritual laws than any of the Jewiſh writers, ſays yet more expreſsly, Mor. Nevoc. b. iii. c. 46. " That though the " Zabii counted blood a very unclean and impure thing, " yet they eat it, becauſe they thought it the food of the " devils, and that he that eat it acquired by that means " ſome communication with the devils; ſo as that the " devils converſe familiarly with him, and reveal future " things to him, as the common people uſe to attribute " thoſe things to devils. There were however ſome among " them who could not eat blood without the greateſt dif- " culty

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unto the Lord [e], unto the door of the tabernacle of the congrega- trench in the ground, for the devils, as they ſuppoſed, to feed on,

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" ficulty and uneaſineſs (for it is a thing a man naturally " abhors); theſe killing any beaſt took his blood to put " it into a veſſel or little trench, and (ſitting in a circle " round the blood) eat the fleſh: imagining in this ma- " nagement, whilſt they eat the fleſh, that the devils eat " the blood, and that that was their food; and that by " theſe means a friendſhip, fraternity, and familiarity was " contracted between them, becauſe they all eat at one " table ſitting together. Beſides, they were of opinion, " that the devils appeared to them in dreams, revealed " future things to them, and were very uſeful to them."

[e] " To the end that the children of Iſrael may bring " their ſacrifices which they offer in the open field, even " that they may bring them unto the Lord." The laſt words intimate plainly, that the ſacrifices which they offered in the open field were offered unto devils, from that which is ſet in oppoſition to them, " even that they " bring them unto the Lord;" or, as it is in the 7th verſe, " And they ſhall" (or, " that they may") " no more offer " their ſacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone " a whoring." If the ſacrifices that were offered in the open fields had been offered to God, and the meaning of the law had only been that they ſhould offer thoſe ſacrifices at the tabernacle which they uſed to offer in the fields, that law would have run ſo, and not as it now does; that is, it would have run ſo as to put the ſacrificing in the open fields in oppoſition to the tabernacle, and not in oppoſition to the Lord, to whom indeed for the future they are here expreſsly commanded to offer them.

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tion, unto the prieſt, and offer them for peace-offering unto the Lord,	according to an idolatrous rite then in uſe, eſpecially on conſulting the dead); I ſay, that they may bring theſe beaſts to be ſlain before me; even unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, as it were, under my eye; and particularly to ſome of the prieſts, who are now to be the only perſons that can offer upon the altar; and offer them by ſome of thoſe prieſts there for a peace-offering unto the Lord.
6 And the prieſt ſhall ſprinkle the blood upon the altar of the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat	Ver. 6. And theſe beaſts ſhall be offered as peace-offerings to me after this manner: the prieſt ſhall ſprinkle the blood, and burn the fat upon the altar;

LEVIT. XVII.	PARAPHRASE.
for a ſweet ſavour unto the Lord.	altar; as a thing that will be well accepted of by the Lord.
7 And they ſhall no more offer their ſacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring [f]: this ſhall be a	Ver. 7. And by this means I will effectually prevent the Iſraelites and the religious proſelytes from this

NOTES.

[f] Ver. 7. "After whom they have gone a whoring." This ſhews that this manner of ſacrificing to devils had been frequently practiſed among them. Moſes gives us an account of their worſhiping devils, Deut. xxxii. 26. And we have the like in Joſhua, Joſh. xxiv. 14. Mention is alſo made in the Pſalms of their "ſacrificing their "ſons and daughters unto devils," Pſal. cvi. 37, 39. and going a whoring after their own inventions, ver. 39. See alſo Zech. xx. 7. and xxiii. 2, 3. Amos v. 25. And ſo Joſephus Albo, in the place before quoted, Sepher Ikkar, Diſc. iii. c. 16. ſays, "that this law was made "juſt after the Iſraelites were come out of Egypt, over-"run with the worſhip of devils." And Fagius ſays, upon Lev. xix. 26. "There are interpreters who think "that the Iſraelites offered ſacrifices to devils in Egypt, "which they called Schedim: and afterwards, that they "might render themſelves the more acceptable to thoſe "devils, they eat part of the ſacrifice near the blood "poured out."

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ſtatute for ever unto them throughout their generations.

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idolatrous and magical uſage which they have run into, not only in Egypt, but in the wilderneſs too, polluting themſelves with theſe dæmons, on the occaſion of killing and ſacrificing beaſts in the open fields: though I have ſo lately and ſo ſolemnly engaged them into covenant with myſelf, and eſpouſed them to me for my own people. To which idolatrous and magical rite I ſee them ſo prone, eſpecially whilſt they continue in the wilderneſs haunted by theſe dæmons; that a law leſs ſtrict than this will not be an effectual cure of this great evil. Wherefore this law (though it ſhall be repealed

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pealed as to that part which relates to beaſts killed for private uſe, when you come into the promiſed land, Deut. xii. 15, 16, 20, 21. where you cannot be near the altar, as you are here, and will not want this ſtrict reſtraint ſo much as you do in the wilderneſs; yet as far as relates to ſacrifices) ſhall continue as long as this diſpenſation of religion laſteth.

¶ 8 And thou ſhalt ſay unto them, Whatſoever man there be of the houſe of Iſrael, or of the ſtrangers which ſojourn among you [z], that of-

Ver. 8, 9. And as the proſelytes of the gate are to abſtain from all idolatrous and magical rites, as well

NOTES.

[z] Ver. 8, 9. "Or of the ſtrangers which ſojourn among "you." That is, the proſelytes of the gate. I think ſo, for this reaſon; that as theſe verſes extend the law contained

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fereth a burnt-offering or ſacrifice,	well as the Iſraelites (for you ſhall not ſuffer an idolater to live), and from thoſe things that might make them either appear like idolaters, or tempt them or the Iſraelites to this or other idolatrous

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contained in all the former verſes of this chapter to ſome perſons which are here called "the ſtrangers that ſojourn "among you," ſo thoſe muſt be the proſelytes of the gate; ſince proſelytes of righteouſneſs were included under Iſraelites, ver. 2. according to the known law, "One "law ſhall be to him that is home-born and him that "ſojourneth among you," Exod. xii. 49. Lev. xxiv. 22. and Numb. xv. 16, 29. This alſo farther appears from the words that follow, "that offereth a burnt-offering "or ſacrifice." For burnt-offerings, or ſacrifices that were peace-offerings, the proſelytes of the gate might offer. But none could offer ſin-offerings or treſpaſs-offerings but Iſraelites and proſelytes of righteouſneſs. Now, ſince no offering is here mentioned but what a proſelyte of the gate might offer, it ſeems plain, that by "the ſtran-"gers that ſojourn among you" in this verſe, we are to underſtand a proſelyte of the gate. If a proſelyte of righteouſneſs had been meant here, why was it not ſaid, "that "offereth a burnt-offering, peace-offering, or a ſin or "treſpaſs-offering."

practices;

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9 And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the Lord; even that man ſhall be cut off from among the people.

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practices; therefore this law ſhall extend to them, as well as to thoſe that are Iſraelites by birth or religion: eſpecially ſince the proſelytes of the gate are permitted to offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, as well as the Iſraelites.

¶ 10 And whatſoever man there be of the houſe of Iſrael, or of the ſtrangers that ſojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood [h]; I will even ſet my face

Ver. 10, 11, and 12. And for the ſame end Moſes was ordered to give another law to the perſons juſt before mentioned, forbidding them to eat blood drawn

NOTES.

[h] Ver. 10. "Or of the ſtranger that ſojourneth among "you, that eateth any manner of blood." By "blood" here is not meant blood mixed with the fleſh, or kept in it by ſtrangling (that is forbidden, ver. 13.); but blood drained from the body of the beaſt, and eat or drunk by itſelf, or mixed up with any thing elſe. And the prohibition of blood follows that of eating things which had been offered to idols, becauſe thoſe offerings were generally

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againſt that ſoul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

11 For the life of the fleſh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make

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drawn from a beaſt, by itſelf or mixed; a thing the Heathen were wont to do in their idolatrous and magical rites: and for this farther reaſon, that God having appointed the life of

NOTES.

rally of the larger animals, ſuch as oxen, lambs, or goats; and that it was from thoſe that ſuch large quantities of blood could be drained, as could be eat or drunk by themſelves, or mixed up with ſomething elſe; for that reaſon, the eating blood is here forbidden next to things offered to idols.

And that blood here is forbidden to the proſelytes of the gate, under the name of "the ſtranger that ſojourneth "among you," is not only plain from the context, and the matter of the prohibition, which it is well known did extend to proſelytes of the gate, but from this conſideration, that blood had been forbidden to the Iſraelites, under which the religious proſelytes are generally comprehended, on two former occaſions, Lev. iii. 17. and vii. 26. which ſeems to be the ſenſe of the following verſe: "Therefore I ſaid" (that is, in thoſe places juſt now quoted) "unto the children of Iſrael, No ſoul of you" (that is, of you Iſraelites by birth or by religion) "ſhall "eat blood, neither ſhall, &c." that is, "And now I "ſay unto you, that no ſtranger that ſojourneth among "you ſhall eat it."

beaſts

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an atonement for your ſouls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the ſoul.

12 Therefore I ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, No ſoul of you ſhall eat blood, neither ſhall any ſtranger that ſojourneth among you, eat blood.

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beaſts to be accepted as a ranſom and atonement for the forfeited lives of offending men; and their blood (one of the principal ſeats of life) to be ſprinkled for that purpoſe in his appointed worſhip; it was not fit that a thing appropriated to ſo ſacred an uſe ſhould be eaten as common food. The eating of blood therefore was capitally prohibited to Iſraelites and proſelytes of the gate by this law, and the ſevereſt degree of God's diſpleaſure annexed to the wilful breach of it. And this is the reaſon why, as he had forbidden the eating of blood before to the Iſraelites, chap. iii. 17. and vii. 26. ſo now he ſhould forbid

it

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13 And whatſoever man there be of the children of Iſrael, or of the ſtranger that ſojourneth among you, that hunteth, and catcheth any beaſt or fowl that may be eaten; he ſhall even pour out the blood thereof [i], and cover it with the duſt.

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it to the proſelytes of the gate.

Ver. 13. And for the ſame end it was that Moſes was ordered alſo to forbid both the Iſraelites and proſelytes of the gate the eating any thing ſtrangled, becauſe things ſtrangled uſed generally to be eaten by

NOTES.

[i] Ver. 13. "He ſhall pour out the blood thereof." This is a prohibition of "things ſtrangled." All the blood of beaſts that were ever permitted to be offered was to be ſprinkled on the altar. The blood of ſuch creatures as were permitted to be eaten, but were not allowed to be ſacrificed, and which had been uſually ſtrangled by the Heathen, and eaten after they were ſo ſtrangled, in honour to their idols, &c. theſe they were not to ſtrangle, but to let out the blood of. And, as the things that were generally ſtrangled were ſuch as were caught in hunting, with nets, ſnares, hawks, &c. therefore thoſe are what the text mentions: but, by a parity of reaſon, all other things ſtrangled are forbidden. And the reaſon why the beaſts and birds caught in hunting are only mentioned is, that they were the things that were uſually ſtrangled.

"And

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by the Heathen in their idolatrous and magical rites. But whereas at other times the Heathen uſed to drain the blood even out of thoſe creatures which they commonly ſtrangled, ſuch as birds and beaſts uſually taken in hunting, and put it into a hole in the earth, and leave it uncovered for their

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" And cover it with the duſt;" leſt the earth ſhould not ſuck it all up, and it ſhould entice men, or appear as if it had enticed men, to an idolatrous uſage: the Heathen ſometimes pouring out the blood of theſe creatures (which they generally ſtrangled) into an hole in the ground, as an idolatrous rite, as we may juſtly ſuppoſe from this place. Maimonides was of this opinion; for he ſays, Mor. Nevoc, p. iii. c. 46. " God commanded that the " blood of all clean beaſts and birds ſhould be co- " vered with duſt where they were killed, that men " might not be able to get together and eat about it, and " ſo the fraternity between them and the devils ſhould " be defeated; though the devil in reality has a full poſ- " ſeſſion of evil men."

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devils and imaginary deities to feaſt upon; therefore I order, that the blood of thoſe creatures, which the Heathens uſed commonly to keep in the body by ſtrangling them, and which you ſhall let out before you eat them, ſhall be let out upon the earth, and not be poured into a hole. And leſt any part of it, when poured upon the earth, ſhould not be ſucked in by the earth, but remain upon it, as if it was left there for thoſe dæmons to feed on, it ſhall be carefully covered with duſt, in order to put an entire end to ſuch magical and idolatrous uſages.

Ver.

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14 For it is the life of all fleſh, the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, Ye ſhall eat the blood of no manner of fleſh; for the life of all fleſh is the blood thereof: whoſoever eateth it ſhall be cut off.

¶ 15 And every ſoul that eateth that which died of itſelf, or that which was torn with

PARAPHRASE.

Ver. 14. And I alſo forbid things ſtrangled, for the ſame reaſon that I forbad blood: blood being the life of every thing, and therefore appointed by me for an atonement for you. This was the reaſon, that I before forbad blood, after it was let out of the bodies of animals, to the children of Iſrael, and that I now forbid them and the proſelytes of the gate, to keep it in the bodies of any animal they kill for private uſe, by ſtrangling it.

Ver. 15. And tho' it is not unlawful for an alien or a proſelyte of the gate to eat of things that die of themſelves, or that are

LEVIT. XVII.	PARAPHRASE.
beaſts [k], (whether it be one of your own country or a ſtranger) he ſhall	torn by beaſts; for you Iſraelites or proſelytes of righteouſneſs

NOTES.

[k] Ver. 15. "That which died of itſelf or is torn by "beaſts." The reaſon of this prohibition is not that the blood was in them; for it might as much be let out by being torn by beaſts as by cutting its throat. And if things torn or dying of themſelves had been forbidden becauſe the blood was in them, they would have been forbidden to the ſame perſons to whom blood and things ſtrangled were forbidden; whereas we ſee, Deut. xiv. 21. that things dying of themſelves or torn by beaſts were allowed to be eaten by a proſelyte of the gate. For it is ſaid, "Ye" (that is, ye Iſraelites and proſelytes of righteouſneſs) "ſhall not eat them" (that is, but under the pain of uncleanneſs); "thou ſhalt give it unto the ſtran-"ger, that he may eat it; or thou mayſt ſell it to an "alien: for thou art an holy people unto the Lord." Beſides, if they had been forbidden becauſe the blood was in them, they would have been forbidden to the Iſraelites and to the religious proſelytes, under the ſame capital puniſhment as blood; whereas they are only forbidden to eat them under the penalty of being "unclean until they "had waſhed their clothes, and until the even." But the true reaſon why the Iſraelites and proſelytes of righteouſneſs are forbidden to eat theſe things may be learnt from Exod. xxii. 31. which is, that it was below the dignity of men holy unto the Lord to eat them. The words are, "And ye ſhall be holy men unto me: neither "ſhall ye eat any fleſh that is torn of beaſts in the field;

"ye

LEVIT. XVII.	PARAPHRASE.
both waſh his clothes and bathe himſelf in water, and be unclean un-	neſs may give them to the one, or ſell them to the other, Deut. xiv. 21. yet it is ſo baſe, unworthy, and

NOTES.

" ye ſhall caſt it to the dogs." But if ye do eat it, ye ſhall be unclean, &c. " And every ſoul, — whether it " be one of your own country or a ſtranger." By " ſtranger" here we are to underſtand a proſelyte of righteouſneſs, becauſe he, as well as he that was their own countryman, was to bathe himſelf in water, waſh his cloaths, and be unclean until the even; a penalty peculiar to thoſe that were Iſraelites by birth or religion: whereas a proſelyte of the gate is allowed to eat of theſe, without being ſubject to this penalty, Deut. xiv. 21.— And it is to be obſerved, that the phraſeology is here ſomewhat varied. Before it is, " And whatſoever man " there be of the children of Iſrael, or of the ſtrangers " that ſojourn among you," ver. 8, 10, 13. But here it is, " And every ſoul, whether it be one of your own " country, or a ſtranger." On which the old commentaries, Sepher Siphra, col. 171. and Peſiktha Zotertha, fol. 23. col. 2. gloſs thus: " *Every ſoul.* Obſerve, it " is added, *one of your own country.* Who is that? Cer- " tainly one in covenant. Whence it follows, that the " ſtranger muſt be one in covenant too." And therefore, where this form of expreſſion occurrs, the Rabbins ſay, that a proſelyte of righteouſneſs is denoted; as Lev. xvi. 29. Numb. xv. 13—17. See Selden, De Jur. Nat. l. ii. c. 2. p. 147. E. L. See alſo what is ſaid above, p. 338. note [d].

unbe-

LEVIT. XVII.	PARAPHRASE.
till the even: then ſhall he be clean.	unbecoming an Iſraelite by birth or religion (who are my people) to eat of any things ſo vile as theſe (fitter for dogs than them, Exod. xxii. 31. Lev. xxii. 8.), that you ſhall let them know, that if any ſoul of them ſhall be guilty of doing a thing ſo much beneath himſelf, he ſhall be in a ſtate of uncleanneſs, ſeparated from my worſhip, and from the reſt of my people, until the evening: nor ſhall he then be reſtored to the tabernacle or the congregation, unleſs he waſh his clothes, and bathe himſelf in water; and then he ſhall be clean.

Ver.

LEVIT. XVII.	PARAPHRASE.
16 But if he waſh them not, nor bathe his fleſh, then he ſhall bear his iniquity.	Ver. 16. But if he does not waſh his clothes, and bathe himſelf, he ſhall be liable to puniſhment: and if he ſhall offer to partake of the peace-offerings, before he has waſhed his clothes and bathed himſelf, he ſhall be cut off from his people.

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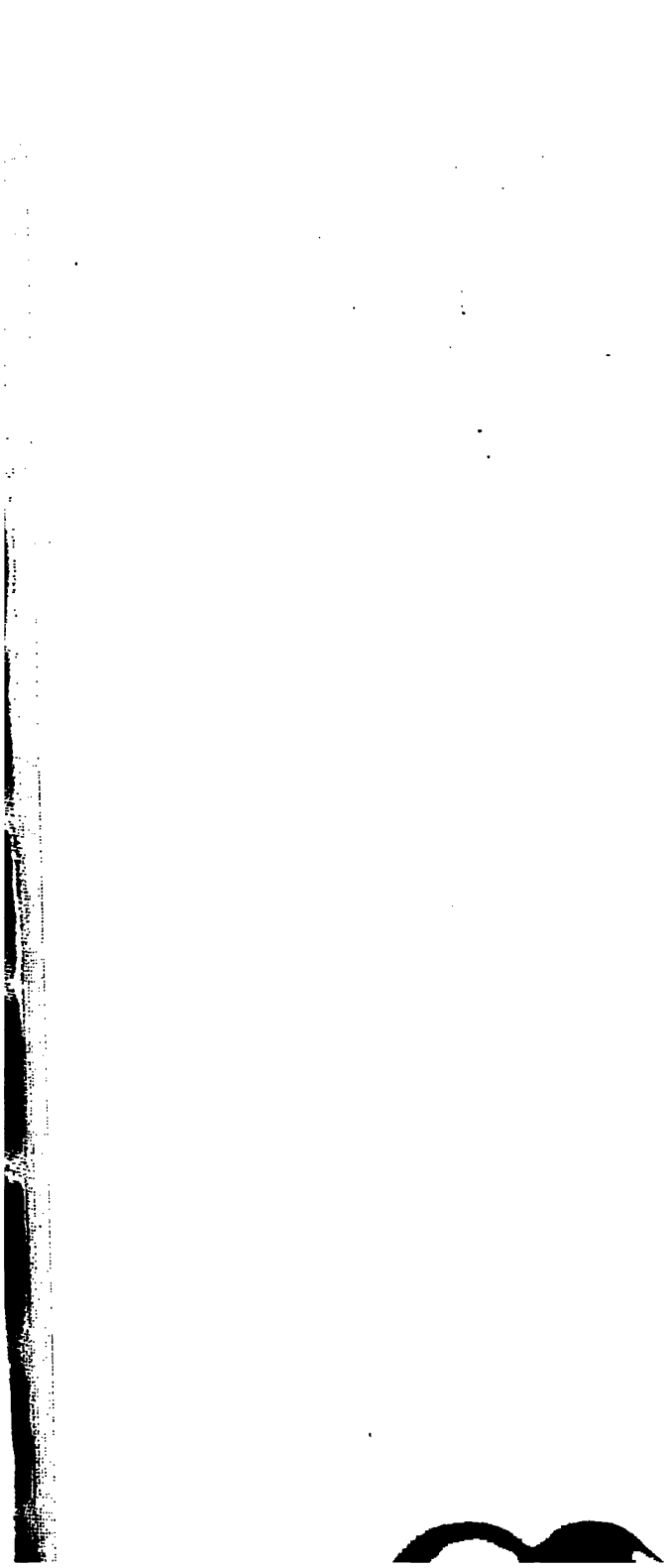

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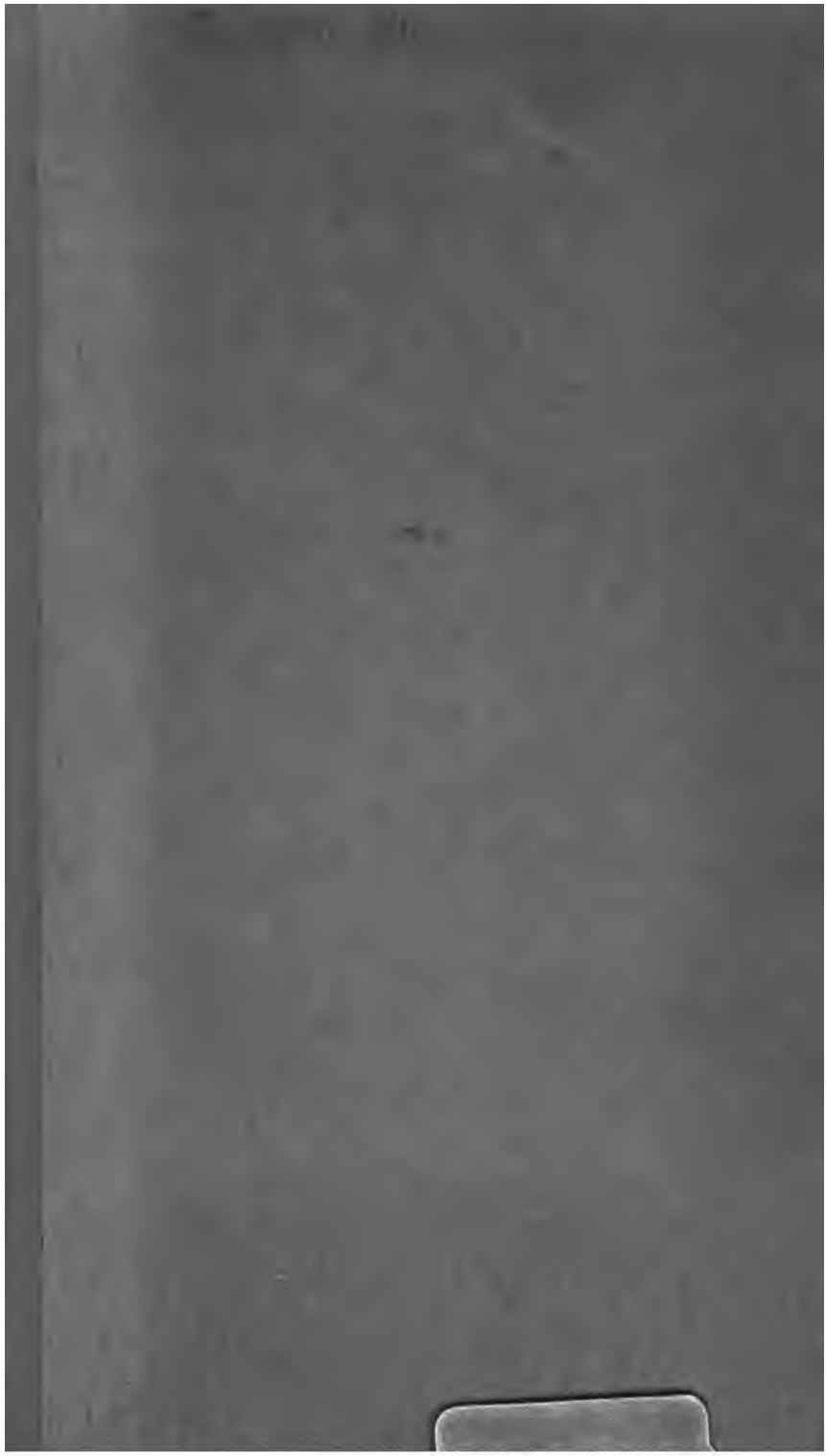
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